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Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

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Tuesday, 8 December 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Yoda	(Burkina Faso)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Kyrle
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Araud
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Shalgham
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Thomas
	United States of America	Ms. Rice
	Viet Nam	Mr. Pham Binh Minh

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

Drug trafficking as a threat to international security

Letter dated 30 November 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2009/615)

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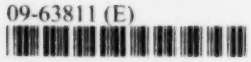

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peace and security in Africa

Drug trafficking as a threat to international security

Letter dated 30 November 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2009/615)

The President (*spoke in French*): I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General and the ministers participating in today's meeting of the Security Council. Their presence is an affirmation of the importance of the subject matter under consideration.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cape Verde, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Luxembourg, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Sweden and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

It is so decided.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 4 December 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations in which he requests that the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Tete Antonio, be invited to participate in the consideration of the item in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Antonio to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 7 December 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations in which he requests that the Commissioner for Gender and Human Development of the Economic Community of West African States Commission, Ms. Adrienne Yandé Diop, be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Ms. Diop to take the seat reserved for her at the side of the Council Chamber.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of members to document S/2009/615, which contains a letter dated 30 November 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

In accordance with the understanding reached earlier among members, the Security Council will take action on a statement by the President in connection with today's meeting prior to hearing statements from the Secretary-General and Council members. Accordingly, after consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council reaffirms its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international

peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Security Council notes with concern the serious threats posed in some cases by drug trafficking and related transnational organized crime to international security in different regions of the world, including in Africa. The increasing link, in some cases, between drug trafficking and the financing of terrorism is also a source of growing concern.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of strengthening transregional and international cooperation on the basis of a common and shared responsibility to counter the world drug problem and related criminal activities, and in support of relevant national, subregional and regional organizations and mechanisms, including with the view to strengthening the rule of law.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of the actions undertaken by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Narcotics Drugs, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other relevant United Nations organs and agencies in facing numerous security risks caused by drug trafficking in many countries and regions, including in Africa. The Council encourages them to undertake further actions in this regard.

"The Security Council stresses the need to reinforce the coordination of United Nations actions, including cooperation with INTERPOL, in order to enhance the effectiveness of international efforts in the fight against drug trafficking at the national, regional and international levels to tackle this global challenge in a more comprehensive manner in accordance with the principle of common and shared responsibility.

"The Security Council reaffirms and commends in that regard the important work of the UNODC in collaboration with the United Nations relevant entities and emphasizes the need for adequate capacities to support national efforts.

"The Security Council invites the Secretary-General to consider mainstreaming the issue of drug trafficking as a factor in conflict prevention strategies, conflict analysis, integrated missions' assessment and planning and peacebuilding support.

"The Security Council encourages States to comply with their obligations to combat drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime, to consider acceding to relevant international conventions, in particular the three United Nations drug conventions, and to investigate and prosecute, as appropriate, persons and entities responsible for drug trafficking and related crimes consistent with international human rights and due process standards.

"The Security Council recognizes the important contribution of States and regional and subregional organizations in tackling drug trafficking in all its aspects, and encourages them to share best practices, as well as information about illicit drug trafficking networks.

"The Security Council also recognizes the important contribution of civil society and other stakeholders in tackling drug trafficking in a comprehensive manner.

"The Security Council calls on the international community and the United Nations system to strengthen their cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in the fight against drug trafficking, including in Africa.

"The Security Council calls on the Secretary-General to provide, as appropriate, more information on drug trafficking and related issues where it risks threatening or exacerbating an existing threat to international peace and security."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2009/32.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso.

I should like to thank the ministers and members of the Council for their presence at this debate and for their support for the presidential statement proposed by Burkina Faso, which the Council has just adopted.

Burkina Faso is pleased to organize this public debate of the Security Council on the important topic of the threat posed by drug trafficking to our collective security. In choosing to debate the issue of drug trafficking and international security, my delegation sought not to add a new item to the already lengthy agenda of the Security Council, but to invite the members of this organ and the full membership of the United Nations to consider how best to contain the harmful effects of a scourge whose impact has achieved alarming proportions.

We are particularly grateful to the Secretary-General for attending this debate. We also express our gratitude to Mr. Antonio Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). We commend the role that UNODC plays in the interdiction of drug trafficking and its assistance to our States in that field.

The current and future threat of drug trafficking to international security is evident. The emergence of extremely powerful drug cartels has had a growing influence on policies and trade. Gang warfare in many countries poses a true threat to the internal security of States and to the stability of democratic institutions. The lucrative black market in drugs supports a number of terrorist groups, fuels the traffic in arms and money-laundering, generates violence and corruption, and as a result poses a serious threat to international peace and security.

From Latin America to Asia, through Europe and Africa, many countries and regions of the world have witnessed first hand the chaos arising from this scourge. Africa, and West Africa in particular, has become an important zone for the transit of cocaine. Drug laboratories built by traffickers bear out UNODC statistics indicating that annual seizures of cocaine in West Africa have grown exponentially in recent years.

Recent violations by drug traffickers of the airspace of some States in the subregion and the clandestine landing and unloading of drug cargoes demonstrate the great vulnerability of those States in the face of such criminal groups, who pose a real threat to our countries. Having become the preferred route — indeed, the new El Dorado — for drug traffickers, the African continent, already facing numerous challenges, merits particular attention as it is evident that the weak rule of law in Africa, poverty, corruption and the clear lack of resources are factors that encourage the activities of drug traffickers. Special attention should be paid to areas weakened by rebellions; these can constitute real threats to peace and security in the West African subregion through the rearming of such rebellions, which could fuel new conflicts.

The expanding scourge demands an international response through heightened vigilance and the firm commitment of the international community, based on universal adherence to the international conventions in the fight against drug trafficking and on effective cooperation and more active coordination of the efforts to combat illicit drugs. That is why the States of the West African subregion, in particular the members of the Economic Community of West African States, decided, under the chairmanship of Burkina Faso, to address the problem head-on by organizing the Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat to West Africa in Praia, Cape Verde, on 28 and 29 October 2008. On that occasion, President Blaise Compaoré delivered a very important message.

That Conference adopted an ambitious Action Plan, the implementation of which needs the international community's support. In our view, three important areas of the Praia Action Plan deserve the support of our development partners. They include: undertaking major national and international joint operations that target the trafficking networks operating in the region; setting up drug trafficking control and prevention units at international airports, sea ports and land border posts; and support for the establishment and strengthening of forensic laboratories for the sharing and exchange of information.

In addition to these operational and institutional aspects of the fight, above all, conditions for the sustainable development of developing countries must be ensured, since as long as concerns such as unemployment and extreme poverty persist, illicit drug trafficking will continue to flourish.

The international community, including international organizations, must make the fight against drugs one of their priorities. That is why the Security Council should include the issue in its integrated strategies for prevention and for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The effects of drug trafficking on security are devastating for the health and productivity of individuals, for families and for the stability of States.

Its consequences are true obstacles to the development of our countries. Thus, there is an increasingly urgent need for us to find lasting solutions. That is why we hope that this debate will help to prompt resolute commitments and collective approaches on the part of the international community as well as individual States.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: I thank the Burkina Faso presidency for putting this important subject on the agenda of the Security Council.

In recent years, drug trafficking has emerged as a leading threat to international peace and security. We see this most clearly in Afghanistan, Colombia and Myanmar, where the production and trafficking of illicit drugs fuel brutal and long-standing insurgencies. But in many other places, too, in West Africa, Central Asia, Central America, the Caribbean and parts of the Mekong region, criminal groups spread violence, fear and insecurity in their effort to control trafficking routes. These groups undermine State authority and the rule of law. They spread corruption, compromise elections and hurt the legitimate economy. In some countries, the huge profits generated through drug trafficking can rival gross domestic product. Drug trafficking also threatens to reverse advances in our peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan, Haiti, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone and elsewhere.

This sobering reality underscores three fundamental points. First, drug trafficking is evolving into an ever graver threat that is affecting all regions of the world. It will require sustained political will and significant resources to counter this challenge.

Secondly, the transnational nature of the threat means that no country can face it alone. This fight requires a comprehensive international approach based on a strong sense of shared responsibility. States must share intelligence, carry out joint operations, build capacity and provide mutual legal assistance. So far, cooperation among Governments is lagging behind cooperation among organized crime networks.

Thirdly, we need a more balanced approach to drug control. Such an approach should focus on reducing the demand for drugs and the harm done by them; on promoting alternative development and the rule of law at the source of the supply; and on disrupting trafficking routes.

The United Nations plays an important role in providing a framework for international cooperation in addressing this challenge. This framework is built around strong United Nations-backed legal instruments, including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. But more needs to be done to ensure that all States become parties to those instruments and that they are implemented more effectively.

The United Nations is also a centre of expertise. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is seen as the authoritative source of information on trends in drug production, consumption and trafficking. It also provides capacity-building in the areas of countering drug trafficking, money laundering and corruption, and those efforts must be properly resourced.

We should draw encouragement from the many promising and innovative initiatives that are taking place. These include regional partnerships with the Caribbean Community, the Economic Community of West African States and others, and strategic cooperation with INTERPOL and other organizations. From West Africa and the Caribbean to Central and Western Asia, these efforts are improving drug control cooperation, building consensus on cross-border issues and promoting security and the rule of law.

Drug trafficking does not respect borders. Most of all, it does not respect people. It is a menace to the health of societies and individuals alike. It is associated with the horrific abuse of women, in particular. Those who run trafficking operations are ruthless and often murderous. We must pursue them and thwart them with the full force of the law and international resolve.

I call on Member States to work with each other and to support the United Nations in this crucially important endeavour. Finally, I welcome the presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/32) that has just been adopted.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Mr. Costa: I am honoured to report again to the Security Council. In the past few years the Council has looked at drug trafficking as a threat to peace and stability in a number of areas already referred to by the Secretary-General — Afghanistan, West Africa and Central America, just to mention a few. Today, I will report on new, worrisome developments concerning both West and East Africa, as well as the Saharan landmass generally.

There are indeed reasons to worry. In the past, Africa, already suffering from other tragedies, never had a drug problem. Today, under attack from several sides, the continent is facing a severe and complex drug problem: not only drug trafficking or production, but also consumption. Serious consequences in terms of health, development and security are inevitable, and I will demonstrate this, aided by a set of maps being distributed as I speak.

First, on the subject of West Africa, the subregion is shifting now from cocaine trafficking to amphetamine manufacturing. West Africa, particularly Guinea-Bissau, has received a lot of attention from the Security Council, because of the 50 to 60 tons per year of cocaine trafficked through the subregion over the past few years. As I mentioned at a meeting of this Council in November (see S/PV.6212), the recent discovery of seven laboratories in Guinea-Conakry is evidence that West Africa is also becoming a producer of synthetic drugs — amphetamines — and of crystal cocaine, refined from pasta basica.

Certainly there is also encouraging news, for which the Security Council can take credit. Initiatives by the Economic Community of West African States, Member States and the United Nations — including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the Department of Political Affairs and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) working together — have attracted attention and resources to the issue. We have detected a decline of cocaine flows into West Africa since mid-2008. A donor conference last week in Vienna attracted financial support. I thank Austria for hosting that event, which was meant to fund initiatives originally planned during the ministerial meeting at Praia in Cape Verde, a meeting already referred to by the President of this Council a few minutes ago.

My second point is about East Africa, where we have detected heroin trafficking flows. This is very new. Indeed, on the eastern side of the continent, on the Horn of Africa, 30 to 35 tons of Afghan heroin are being trafficked into East Africa every year. This is causing a dramatic increase in drug addiction of the worse type, namely, heroin injection. It is also spreading HIV, as I witnessed two weeks ago in the slums of Nairobi and Mombasa in Kenya. Drug treatment facilities are badly needed and I urge donors to help.

Drug trafficking is only one illicit activity in eastern Africa. Mainly because of the dramatic situation in Somalia, the region is becoming a free economic zone for all sorts of trafficking — drugs, migrants, guns, hazardous waste and natural resources — in addition to having the world's most dangerous waterways because of piracy. On 24 November, in Nairobi, ministers from the region issued a political declaration to strengthen the rule of law and human security. UNODC was pleased to see its own action plan for the region endorsed by the ministers, but the resources needed to assist East African countries now under attack are still unavailable.

My third point is about drug trafficking across the Sahel, which is a new problem, though perhaps inevitable. We have now acquired evidence that the two streams of illicit drugs — heroin into eastern Africa and cocaine into western Africa — are now meeting in the Sahara, creating new trafficking routes across Chad, Niger and Mali. Repercussions in neighbouring countries — for example, in the Maghreb countries — are inevitable. I will stress two facts that are noteworthy. First, as cocaine from the West is being traded one-on-one with heroin from the East, drugs are becoming a sort of new currency in the area. Drugs enrich not only organized crime, as we know. As in the Andes and in West Asia, terrorists and anti-government forces in the Sahel are extracting resources from the drug trade to fund their operations, purchase equipment and pay foot soldiers.

Secondly, drug trafficking in the region is taking on a whole new dimension. In the past, trade across the Sahara was by caravans and camels. Today it is larger in size, faster at delivery and more high-tech, as evidenced by the debris of a Boeing 727 found on 2 November in the Gao region of Mali, an area affected by insurgency and terrorism. It is scary — and I stress this point — it is scary that this new example of the links between drugs, crime and terrorism was discovered by chance, following the plane crash.

What can be done? To conclude, I will say that, first and foremost, we must strengthen national capacity. Greater and stronger development is needed across the region, so as to improve judicial systems and the rule of law — a point raised by the Secretary-General. But no State can tackle this transnational threat on its own. I invite members of the Council to recognize that shared responsibility is more than a rhetorical device; it is, and it must be, an operational concept. Therefore, and secondly, information sharing must be promoted among affected countries in order to disrupt trafficking networks. UNODC has brokered regional intelligence-sharing platforms in Central Asia — one is to be inaugurated tomorrow — in West Asia and in the Gulf. Such arrangements are not a threat to sovereignty; on the contrary, they defend the sovereignty now appropriated by rather sinister actors. Thirdly — and to be practical about finding solutions to the situation — I urge the Council to consider the creation of a trans-Saharan crime monitoring network, to improve information, monitor suspicious activity, exchange evidence, facilitate legal cooperation and strengthen regional efforts against organized crime. Such a trans-Saharan crime network would ensure a first, practical response to a growingly serious problem. An early warning device of this sort will especially help the review of situations that truly warrant investigation without having to rely on occasional circumstances such as a plane crash or an accidental drug seizure at sea. Together with our traditional partners, the Departments I mentioned at the United Nations and INTERPOL, we would be happy to assist. At the same time, UNODC shall continue to report on new developments in the region and elsewhere — as we have done periodically for the Security Council and other bodies — in order to facilitate understanding of the situation on the ground and, as a result, enable an appropriate response.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Costa for his briefing.

I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I invite Her Excellency Ms. Susan Rice, member of the cabinet of the President of the United States of America and Permanent Representative of the United States, to take the floor.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): The United States would like to thank Burkina Faso for its leadership in drawing attention to the threat to international peace and security posed by drug trafficking, particularly in West Africa. I welcome Minister Yoda back to the Chamber. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him and you, Mr. President, and your entire delegation for providing such an important voice to this body over the past two years. We also appreciate the update — as comprehensive and informative as ever — from Executive Director Costa and look forward to future briefings from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Drug trafficking is truly an international problem, and one with very serious consequences for the security and development of society. Increasingly, the illicit activities of violent criminal networks pay no heed to borders and undermine our common security and our shared economic health. Illicit actors are smuggling billions of dollars worth of illegal goods into our jurisdictions, thus weakening the rule of law, democracy and economic development. Transnational drug enterprises are just that: enterprises. They search constantly for higher profits and new business opportunities, and they are closely linked to other transnational criminal enterprises. Their cutting-edge organizations and their weapons and other equipment for communications, encryption and surveillance are often better than those available to the law enforcement officials charged with bringing them to justice.

Fighting transnational drug trafficking is not something that any one Government can do alone. We must work closely together on several levels: bilateral, subregional, regional and global. Narco-trafficking in West Africa is a serious and growing threat. It further destabilizes an already turbulent region whose past and present remain punctuated by civil wars and coups d'état.

Drug trafficking robs populations of legitimate sources of economic activity and development, and it tears apart the social fabric. West Africa has become a major trafficking route for cocaine moving from South America to Europe. Although most transit States in Africa do not yet have significant markets for illegal drug consumption, illegal drug abuse eventually takes

root and spreads. The wholesale value of cocaine entering Europe from West Africa is estimated to be $1.8 billion, with perhaps $450 million going to traffickers. These illicit profits far exceed the resources that regional Governments have to combat trafficking. The wholesale value of just a few months of trans-shipped cocaine can eclipse the gross domestic product of many countries in the region. Such situations threaten good governance and local and regional stability.

Taking effective measures against narco-trafficking requires both increased donor assistance and a clear demonstration of political will by regional Governments. The key to success is capable, reliable and transparent institutions. Drug traffickers thrive in poverty-stricken and permissive environments marked by porous borders and weak State authority. Corruption and ineffective governance often create de facto impunity for drug traffickers.

My Government therefore welcomes the Political Declaration and Action Plan adopted by West African leaders one year ago. We also welcome the recently launched West African Crime Initiative, which brings together the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the United Nations and the International Criminal Police Organization. The United States further welcomes UNODC's technical assistance activities, which will strengthen regional States' institutional capacity to combat the menace of international drug trafficking.

UNODC's regional programme for West Africa will represent a strategic road map for the organization's activities. Furthermore, we applaud the results of the donor's meeting that UNODC hosted with the Government of Austria in Vienna on 3 December, which raised more than €15 million to help ECOWAS reduce the region's vulnerability to drugs and crime.

For our part, the United States is working as a partner, both bilaterally and multilaterally, to combat the scourge of drug trafficking. The United States provides assistance for counter-narcotics and law enforcement and criminal justice capacity-building in more then 90 partner countries. In particular, we are supporting Member States' efforts to accede to and implement the three United Nations drug conventions, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the United Nations Convention against Corruption all of which provide the international legal framework and tools to confront this threat. Implementing those conventions and applying those tools will serve as a force multiplier.

The United States has already devoted more than $13 million to addressing this challenge in West Africa during the last fiscal year, and we are working to secure additional funding for bilateral and regional programmes. For example, we are working with the Government of Ghana to further develop an elite counter-narcotics law enforcement capacity to investigate drug trafficking organizations and support high-level prosecutions.

Our discussion today focuses on West Africa, but we face growing threats elsewhere too. In Haiti, for instance, the net flow of drugs has grown recently, and the Government, by its own admission, lacks the capacity to counter these flows or fully adjudicate related crimes. The United Nations and its Member States have invested years of peacekeeping efforts in Haiti. We cannot afford to let narco-trafficking undermine the real successes that the Government's efforts and the efforts of this body have begun to yield.

In Afghanistan the drug trade threatens political stability and economic growth by funding insurgents, feeding corruption and undermining the rule of law. While the United States continues to provide funding to UNODC for counter-narcotics activities in Afghanistan, we urge others to provide extra-budgetary contributions too. Over the next year we will seek to provide together $450 million in direct assistance for counter-narcotics efforts in Afghanistan.

We face enormous challenges as we seek to curb the increasing power of ruthless transnational crime and drug groups that threaten our communities. The United States is committed to combating these threats by working to dismantle criminal networks, develop law enforcement capabilities and help strengthen institutions and governance. This is a serious challenge, but we are intensifying our work with our fellow Member States and our international partners to meet it.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give now the floor to The Right Honourable Gareth Thomas, Member of Parliament and Minister of State for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr. Thomas (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. We are particularly pleased to see you here today and are grateful to you and the Burkina Faso delegation for all your hard work in promoting an agenda item to which we attach great importance too. I would like to thank too the Secretary-General for his words, and Mr. Antonio Maria Costa for his informative and thought-provoking briefing.

We agree that drug trafficking constitutes a threat to international peace and security. We see this, as others have said, in several regions of the world. For example in Afghanistan, the drugs trade is one of the most powerful forces undermining legitimate Government and promoting instability. In that particular context I was pleased to see a decrease in poppy cultivation in Afghanistan by some 22 per cent this year, and an increase in the number of important drugs traffickers being prosecuted by Afghan authorities. But these gains are fragile, so we look to the Government of Afghanistan, with the support of international partners, to consolidate this progress.

Today we are particularly concerned about the threat posed by drug trafficking in West Africa and specifically the fact that West Africa has become a significant route for cocaine being trafficked from Latin America into Europe. There are a number of factors that make West Africa particularly attractive to drugs traffickers. Recent events in Guinea and elsewhere have highlighted the fragility of political institutions across much of West Africa. We strongly support African Union calls for an end to unconstitutional changes of government. West Africa is also the shortest disembarkation point when travelling from South America to Europe. Organized criminal gangs, particularly from Latin America, have been scaling up their operations and their presence in the region in the past five years. And we know that when their activities are disrupted in one country, they then look to exploit another.

These developments have serious implications for West Africa. Organized crime, drug trafficking, the misappropriation of assets and corruption disrupt growth, undermine investment and discourage entrepreneurship. In West Africa, organized crime and drug trafficking have the potential to undermine all the good work that has been done to promote economic development, reduce corruption and improve poor people's lives.

The clear role that West African States, and their leaders in particular, can play is crucial. That is why we thank the Cape Verdean leaders, for example, for the excellent work they have done on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Regional Action Plan against drug trafficking. Now is the time to convert this plan into action and to operationalize it on the ground. The United Kingdom stands ready to help in taking this forward.

We welcome the work that the United Nations is undertaking in the region through its offices such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the United Nations Office for West Africa. This includes developing programmes such as the West Coast Initiative, aimed at taking forward the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan. The United Kingdom Government is committed to supporting these efforts. That is why we have set up a cross-governmental strategy group to mobilize and coordinate United Kingdom counter-narcotics activity in West Africa. We have provided £750,000 this year to fund counter-narcotics projects in Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria. And we aim to provide more funding next year. Our Serious Organized Crime Agency has increased its presence in the region to help local law enforcement agencies target traffickers and develop better intelligence. Staff members of our Border Agency have been deployed to airports in Ghana and Nigeria to target drug mules. And we are working in partnership with Governments in West Africa to address governance and corruption concerns, and to tackle constraints to economic development.

We have had some successes but more needs to be done. We must make clear to cocaine users the impact they are having on the lives of people in producer and transit countries. We need to continue to help Colombia to combat its drug cartels. We need to work with international partners and organizations to ensure a coordinated and coherent response.

The threat from organized crime is constantly evolving. Criminals are very resourceful in finding new trades, new routes and new methods. We need to make sure our response is equally flexible.

We thank Burkina Faso for their draft presidential statement. We support the recommendation that the United Nations should consider mainstreaming drug trafficking into its wider conflict prevention, assessment and peacebuilding activities. And we call

on the Secretary-General to provide more information on drug trafficking where it risks threatening or exacerbating an existing threat to international peace and security.

In closing, I should like to thank the outgoing members of the Security Council — Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Croatia, Libya and Viet Nam — for all their contributions over the last two years. And I would also like to welcome the incoming members — Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Lebanon and Nigeria. We look forward to working with them.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, His Excellency Pham Binh Minh.

Mr. Pham Binh Minh (Viet Nam): I thank the Burkina Faso Presidency for the initiative to organize this open debate of the Security Council. And I thank you, Mr. President, for personally presiding over the debate. I also thank the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for their participation and statements.

More than ten years have passed since the General Assembly's special session on the world drug problem in 1998 and the international community has recorded encouraging achievements in this area. With greater importance attached to the prevention and control of drug trafficking, 95 per cent of United Nations Member States have acceded to the three international conventions on drug control — the highest rate of accession enjoyed by any United Nations legal document. The production of drugs and the number of drug users in the world have shown a downward trend, as reported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. We recognize the efforts made by the United Nations specialized agencies, especially UNODC, in coordinating international drug control activities.

However, the situation of drug crime in the world continues to see complicated developments. As the profits from drug trafficking reach around $500 billion per year, second only to that from arms smuggling, drug criminals have exerted every effort to maintain drug trafficking at all costs. In addition to sophisticated means and advanced technology, they have taken advantage of globalization to expand drug production and consumption, increased contacts with criminals in other dangerous fields such as money laundering and arms smuggling, and established transnational criminal organizations. The super profits from drug trafficking are used to finance terrorist groups and acts of violence, causing unstable or even anarchic situations, and aggravating crises where they occur, and thus producing long-term negative impacts on security, public order and economic development.

The prevention and suppression of such dangerous crimes require joint efforts on the part of the international community. In the fight against drug trafficking, production and transport, we support enhanced international and regional cooperation, with the United Nations entities, in particular the UNODC, playing the leading role. While primary responsibility rests with the States concerned, United Nations bodies, including the Security Council, and other international and regional organizations have an important role to play in supporting and coordinating these efforts with a view to ensuring their effectiveness and avoiding duplication and waste of resources.

While we are fully aware of the challenges posed by drug trafficking, Viet Nam gives high priority to drug prevention and control. Viet Nam adopted the law on drug prevention and control in 2000 and amended it in 2008. Our Government established the National Committee on Drug Prevention and Control and endorsed the Master Plan and National Target Programme on Drug Prevention and Control until 2010.

Viet Nam has ratified the three United Nations conventions on drug control. In the context of the continuing spread of the drug menace and the increasing consensus of the international community on the need to strengthen the fight against drug trafficking, we hope that these important conventions will soon achieve universality. Viet Nam has also expanded cooperation with countries in the region, especially those in the Mekong subregion, and we have worked closely with UNODC. So far, Viet Nam has signed eight bilateral agreements on drug control, with Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, China, the Russian Federation, Thailand, Myanmar, Hungary and the United States. We hold that bilateral and multilateral cooperation play a critical role in the fight against drug trafficking.

As a constructive and responsible member of the Security Council, Viet Nam has actively participated in the work of the Council, thus contributing to the

maintenance of international peace and security as well as the fulfilment of the Council's mandate in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. During its two Presidencies, Viet Nam worked intensively to promote consensus among Member States in resolving important issues, organizing an open debate on "Children and armed conflict" and another on "Women and peace and security", which led to the adoption of resolution 1889 (2009).

I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General, the Secretariat and Member States — and to Council members in particular — for their support for and cooperation with Viet Nam, which helped us fulfil the duty entrusted to us by the United Nations membership.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the Vice-Minister for European and International Affairs of Austria, His Excellency Johannes Kyrle.

Mr. Kyrle (Austria): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened today's open debate on drug trafficking as a threat to international security. Austria attaches great importance to the ongoing fight against drug trafficking and organized crime. We highly appreciate the efforts of the delegation of Burkina Faso and support the presidential statement to be adopted today. Moreover, Austria associates itself with the statement to be delivered by Sweden on behalf of the European Union later in this meeting. I would like to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General for his commitment to this important issue. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Costa for his valuable input and committed leadership of the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna, which plays a central role in combating illicit drug trafficking around the world.

Many States and their populations are increasingly ravaged by organized crime, in particular trafficking in drugs, human beings and arms, and related illicit activities such as money-laundering. These scourges destabilize governments, endanger democracy and respect for human rights, and hamper the economic and social development of entire regions in Africa and beyond. Organized crime is prevalent first and foremost in regions where Government structures are weak or even lacking, often owing to armed conflict. Likewise, organized crime — and the revenues derived from illicit activities — fuel and prolong conflicts, and may contribute to the financing of terrorism.

Globalized criminal networks engaged in illicit activities pose threats to internal and external security alike. Drug trafficking from origin to destination affects many countries in transit, often across several continents. No single nation can effectively tackle these challenges on its own. The presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/32) before us, therefore, rightly underlines the need to strengthen transregional and international cooperation on the basis of a common and shared responsibility.

A number of States confronted with difficult security challenges, especially in Africa, lack the capacity to respond quickly and effectively to them. We therefore commend the growing efforts to respond jointly to those challenges in the framework of regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union. West Africa faces particular challenges in the fight against drug trafficking. In recent years, the region has turned into an important hub for cocaine trafficking from South America to Europe, and has also become a centre for the production of narcotic drugs. More investment needs to be made in developing regional and domestic capacities to tackle these problems effectively.

To this end, UNODC, ECOWAS and the Government of Austria co-hosted a donor round table in Vienna last week, with a view to increasing support for the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking and organized crime. Austria pledged, inter alia, substantive contributions to the joint West African Coastal Initiative earmarked for Sierra Leone, and a UNODC project in Mali aimed at capacity-building among national authorities. Austria will continue to support the zonal offices of ECOWAS, which play an important role in monitoring member States' respect of the pertinent ECOWAS legal instruments against drug trafficking and organized crime.

It is only by acting in concert that the international community will be able to prevail in the fight against drug trafficking. We therefore commend the role of UNODC in assisting the various stakeholders and coordinating their efforts in the region and beyond. In order to ensure the continuous delivery of technical assistance, including advisory and

analytical services, we fully subscribe to the need to strengthen the capacities of UNODC, as emphasized in the Presidential Statement.

A recent UNODC report has underlined the importance of strengthening the rule of law as a most effective remedy for enhancing countries' immunity to organized crime. The Council should duly take this into account when devising sustainable strategies for conflict areas. Universal adherence to, and accurate implementation of, pertinent international legal instruments, such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the United Nations drug control Conventions, should be our common goal.

Our success or failure in tackling the scourge of drug trafficking will have a direct impact on the well-being of our citizens. The Council should step up its deliberations on this important matter, be it in general terms or with regard to specific regions. Austria would therefore welcome further debates in this regard.

The President: (*spoke in French*) I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Mexico.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for his briefing. We welcome the presence in the Chamber of Mr. Bedouma Alain Yoda, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, to preside over our work during this meeting. And we reaffirm our support for his presidency's successful leadership of the Security Council for December.

This is indeed a timely debate, given the international dimension that drug trafficking and its related crimes have taken on, not only in Africa but all over the world. The so-called new threats to international security are multidimensional, as the global drug problem and transnational organized crime show. Both of these problems deserve priority treatment, given their implications for the security, prosperity and development of our societies.

As Mr. Yoda indicated, this meeting will, without a doubt, contribute to deeper reflection on this problematic issue that disregards borders, weakens States and affects conflicts in various regions of the world. Drug trafficking must be addressed across the board, in all its aspects, from promoting prevention and treatment in countries with the highest levels of drug consumption, to international cooperation aimed at dismantling its increasingly sophisticated criminal linkages with their immense capacity to corrupt and their firepower, challenging security and undermining the rule of law.

It is important to remember that the fight against drug trafficking, besides its cost in human lives to our societies, diverts significant resources to the detriment of economic and social development, and we therefore deem it appropriate that the Security Council focuses its attention and promotes the adoption of effective measures through the items on its agenda that foster strategies aimed at preventing drug trafficking, in order to protect States and international security.

The fight against this scourge requires a firm political commitment on the international level, based on the globally recognized principle of the shared responsibility of States, with the aim of building mutual trust and encouraging strategies to eradicate this evil, while at the same time respecting in full the sovereignty of States. The threat posed by criminal acts related to drug trafficking demands effective international cooperation based on integrated, multidisciplinary and balanced strategies. This is necessary in order to ensure that the actions geared to reducing supply and demand are mutually reinforcing, in order to seal off areas of impunity, dismantle traffickers' operational structures and respond to the increased speed with which this dangerous phenomenon is progressing, undermining the socio-economic and political stability of our societies as well as their sustainable development.

Drug trafficking and its related crimes weaken States that have emerged from conflict, as well as their institutions. As a result, we must consider its regional and global impact, as has been said previously. It is clear that the power of the corruption and violence generated by the criminal drug industry are a destabilizing factor in such States. There is growing concern about the growth in organized crime involved in drug trafficking in a number of West African States, which are being used as havens or transit points for drugs that are produced in other parts of the world, particularly Latin America, and are en route to Europe.

These illicit groups and activities also pose threats to peacebuilding efforts in various States, as stated clearly by the Economic Community of West

African States. The growing prominence of these criminal and drug trafficking groups underscores the need to strengthen the national capacity of States to counteract these phenomena and to combat impunity and illicit drug trafficking.

It is crucial that the institutions and authority of the State be restored in countries that have emerged from internal conflict and that are affected by drug trafficking. Mexico is of the view that this illicit activity poses a serious threat to the security of States, and given that both the roots of this phenomenon and the solution to it transcend borders, it is crucial that international cooperation be promoted in order to tackle this scourge.

The global drug problem was the subject of a very detailed examination during the debates held this year in Vienna in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in New York during the Third Committee's October meetings on international drug control and in the November plenary meeting of the General Assembly to consider the results of the high-level segment of the most recent session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (see A/64/PV.38).

Mexico participated actively in those events, as its recognizes that the General Assembly provides the ideal forum in which to highlight the importance, scope and implications of renewed international cooperation aimed at achieving tangible results against illicit drug trafficking by promoting a comprehensive and balanced strategy to curb this problem. This was reflected in the omnibus draft resolution on international cooperation against the world drug problem, which was adopted by consensus and was coordinated by my country.

We would like to highlight the fact that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs has promoted significant resolutions on the links between drug trafficking and the illicit trafficking in arms, on strengthening measures to combat money laundering linked to drug trafficking and related crimes, and on strengthening inter-regional cooperation between Latin American and Caribbean States and West African States.

The institutional response of the United Nations is very important, but — let us be clear — it is not enough, as drug trafficking is a increasingly complex phenomenon of globalization that requires a coordinated response and the unequivocal commitment of the international community.

Mexico believes that the United Nations must play a more active role in the debate on the fight against drugs and transnational organized crime, not only through its technical forums, but also by promoting high-level political commitments to combating this scourge. In 2010, we will celebrate the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which will provide a timely opportunity to reflect on the future of this regime.

We have a normative framework that has been in place since the 1980s. However, in spite of the existence of these excellent norms, we have been unable to put an end to illicit drug trafficking. The international community thus faces the immense challenge of guaranteeing the implementation of the conventions and agreements in this field.

The complexity of the issues associated with illicit drug trafficking and their various political, economic and social aspects highlight the need for international cooperation in order to combat this global threat. Therefore, it is particularly important that we seek out ways in which the Security Council can complement and contribute to the significant work carried out by the General Assembly and other United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna, in order to define better coordinated responses for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Finally, Mexico has taken the sovereign decision to commit itself to striving tirelessly to combat drug trafficking, exercising full State authority in protecting our society while shouldering our responsibilities to the international community and encouraging international cooperation on this issue at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, first of all, to thank you, Mr. President, for your presence here and to welcome that of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa.

Costa Rica was pleased at the convening of this debate. It reflects the growing awareness and the concern of the international community with regard to the threat posed by international drug trafficking to the security of many States and regions of the world.

For many years, the drug industry was a lucrative business that was run by criminal groups. However, in recent decades, new actors have joined the criminals, and what was once merely an illicit activity has become a threat to the security of States and regions. The new alliances in international drug trafficking circles now include warring parties, terrorists, insurgents, paramilitary groups and corrupt State agents. The aims of these new alliances include the reduction or even the elimination of the presence of the State, with the consequences that we are all well acquainted with.

This bleak picture has started to take root in Western Africa at a time when the region is strengthening the basic pillars of governance, the rule of law, peace and stability. These efforts are frequently undermined in States with porous borders, weak institutions, widespread poverty, high unemployment — in particular among young people — and widespread corruption. All of these factors make the subregion very vulnerable and allow organized international crime networks to operate over a large section of its territory and to expand the drug trafficking that takes places across West and Central Africa and is aimed at the markets of Europe.

The illicit drug trafficking networks take advantage of the weaknesses of and the challenges facing the countries of the subregion in terms of economic development and employment. The poverty and political weakness that prevent States in the region from exercising their authority throughout their territory provide the breeding ground for drug trafficking, which is frequently associated with insurgents or mercenaries. Drug traffickers can then also become involved in production, as has happened in West Africa, as Mr. Costa informed us in November (see S/PV.6212).

However, the threats to national and regional security are far from an exclusively African phenomenon. Many Latin American and Caribbean States as well as Asian States have also suffered under the onslaught of drug trafficking. Allow me to take this opportunity, while the Security Council is debating the threat posed by drug trafficking to the security of States and regions, to briefly mention the experience of some Latin American States, including Costa Rica.

I should like to begin by recalling that the world's main cocaine producing countries are found south of the Central American isthmus. According to reliable sources, there lies the origin of a trade that moves more than 1,000 tons of that drug every year. To the North lie the countries of Central America and the Caribbean, which are situated in the so-called drug trafficking corridors through which move drugs bound for the United States market.

As in Africa, drug trafficking in Central America and the Caribbean flourishes by virtue of State weakness, poverty and marginalization. Drug trafficking routes in the Americas cut across the three poorest countries of the continent and others with very limited resources to combat it. Central America, the countries that lie along the Central American drug trafficking corridor and Western Africa are recovering from wars that came to an end less than 20 years ago. They are also frequently assailed by large-scale climactic events. In those places, too, institutions are weak and poverty provides a breeding ground for corruption among poorly paid officials and public employees.

The drug trade exploits its advantaged position in order to recruit, better pay, train and arm its own armies, to equip them with sophisticated equipment, and to simplify their logistical and procurement chains. As if that were not enough, Central American and Caribbean transit States — as well as countries in Africa — also provide new markets for the drug trade. Our people thereby become victims who ultimately support the expansion of criminal activities. As a result, the burden to be borne by States increases by virtue of the vast resources that have to be devoted to combating international drug trafficking, which therefore cannot be used for efforts to promote peace, stability and human and institutional development.

I should like to conclude my sombre statement on the effects of international drug trafficking on countries along the routes on which it operates by pointing out that the trend towards consolidation, which exists even with regard to this heinous activity, has had consequences in Africa and other regions of the world. Competition between cartels and their constant movement from one place to another as a result of

international efforts serve to heighten the porous character of the borders of weak States where they set up their operations, bring new violence, corrupt institutions and alter the lives of populations straddling various States.

This Security Council debate should be seen as a call to strengthen early warning systems and to promote closer follow-up by the Secretariat and the Council in the most vulnerable countries. We call for the strengthening of all efforts that can serve to spread the rule of law. We also call for galvanizing the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations system as a whole with a view to preventing and addressing situations that, left ignored, could threaten entire regions and require costly intervention by the international community in the future.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Shalgham (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would first like to express my gratitude to you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting — the first Security Council debate of its kind — on the effects of illegal drug trafficking on international security, and for personally presiding over this important meeting. On behalf of the Libyan delegation, I should also like to thank you and your delegation for preparing the presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/32) that the Council has adopted. I also wish to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his statement, as well as Mr. Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for his important briefing.

There is no doubt that, in debating this important issue, the Security Council is contributing to the efforts of other United Nations bodies to address the illicit drug trade and its serious consequences. With support from UNODC, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council have addressed several aspects of drug trafficking, in particular in connection with its effects on public health and development and its links and contribution to organized crime.

There is also no doubt that, several decades ago, the international community realized the importance of international cooperation in controlling both drug trafficking and drug use. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs was concluded in 1961 and amended in 1972; the Convention on Psychotropic Substances was signed in 1971; and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances was finalized in 1988. In addition, the General Assembly, which devoted its twentieth special session to the problem of drugs, adopted a Political Declaration (resolution S-20/2, annex) that identified the objectives of international cooperation in addressing this issue. At its fifty-second session, held this year, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs devoted a high-level segment to evaluating the progress made since 1988 in achieving the goals identified at the twentieth special session, as well as to establishing priorities for the future. In that connection, on 12 March 2009, ministers and representatives participating in the segment issued the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem.

Against the backdrop of advances in communications and transportation — and the opportunities they provide for criminals to move quickly and en masse — as well as the existence of a large number of vulnerable States, promoting international cooperation to combat the drug trade is more urgent than ever. Studies have shown that there are strong links between drug trafficking and armed conflicts, the proliferation of small arms, money-laundering and the financing of organized crime and terrorism. The illicit traffic in drugs now constitutes a significant source of laundered funds. It is also an important tool in the hands of those who seek to spread instability by promoting corruption and proliferating small arms, which are the most important component in fuelling conflicts in Africa.

Recent reports point to a disturbing increase in cocaine trafficking across West Africa, as well as heroin trafficking in East Africa. That is due to the precarious security situation in several States in those regions. That creates a serious threat to the security and the stability of those States and creates obstacles to sustainable development in them. It also constitutes a serious threat to all the States in the region.

In the expansive Sahel region of Africa, there is a concern that drug trafficking might be a principal source of financing for terrorist groups that are rampant in those desert areas and that continuously threaten the lives of the populations and of tourists.

Those groups seek to destabilize the States of the region.

The current situation in West Africa and the Sahel region requires international financial and technical support to the efforts of States in the region to promote cooperation among themselves in controlling their borders and in combating organized crime. We wish to express our gratitude to UNODC for their efforts in that area.

In countries where significant numbers of the population depend on the cultivation of drugs — such as Afghanistan, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia and Laos — there is a need for the international community to continue providing support to farmers and to urge them to take on legitimate and peaceful agricultural activities that are economically sound and sustainable. In that way, the production and supply of narcotics and drugs throughout the world will be reduced while food security would be strengthened and poverty reduced.

In conclusion, we commend the important role of UNODC, under the leadership of Mr. Costa, and we value his role in promoting and strengthening the capacity of Member States to confront illicit drug trafficking, crime and terrorism. We urge that UNODC be provided with the necessary financial resources to support its work.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): First, I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate and honouring us with your presence. Turkey believes that it is very timely and pertinent for the Security Council to deliberate on the important issue of drug trafficking as a threat to international security. Therefore I thank the delegation of Burkina Faso for taking that initiative.

We also thank the Secretary-General and Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for their comprehensive and insightful briefings. We very much appreciate the Secretary-General's leadership on raising awareness of the issue and the valuable work carried out by UNODC in building the capacity of Member States to combat illicit drugs and the links with organized crimes and terrorism.

Many of the difficulties, tensions and challenges that nations face vis-à-vis drug trafficking today are not exclusive to them as individual States. Indeed, drug abuse, illicit drug trafficking and associated crimes such as terrorism and money-laundering are issues of grave concern that entail severe repercussions for the entire international community. Hence, there is a need for strong international cooperation on the basis of common and shared responsibility.

Aside from its international, global character, drug trafficking also presents a complex and multidimensional problem with enormous financial implications. Today the drug problem not only adversely affects the economic and social fabric of the countries concerned, it also constitutes a threat to the security of States. In particular, the increasing links between drug trafficking and acts of terrorism are a cause for serious concern. Today it is a well-documented fact that the revenue generated by drug trafficking has become a primary source of terrorist financing. It also undermines State authority, fuels corruption and hampers economic development and rule of law.

Therefore, given the magnitude and complexity of threats posed by drug trafficking, the fight against that challenge must be based on a comprehensive and effective strategy. The supply, demand and trafficking aspects of the drug problem have to be considered as interdependent aspects of the same predicament and thus should be dealt with through a balanced and integrated approach.

Turkey is a natural bridge between Asia and Europe. Therefore, as a transit country, it is generally affected by illicit trafficking of opiates from East to West and of precursors and synthetic drugs from West to East. Accordingly, Turkey makes every effort to further enhance the effectiveness of its efforts to combat illicit drug trafficking. However, as I have already mentioned, no country alone can combat drug trafficking, and thus national efforts must be complemented by effective international cooperation.

With that in mind, Turkey has signed and ratified all relevant United Nations drug control treaties and has concluded bilateral cooperation agreements with more than 70 countries. Turkey also actively contributes to the work of relevant international and regional platforms. We have long-standing cooperation with UNODC, the International Narcotics Control Board, the Paris Pact, the Council of Europe and the Southeastern Europe Centre for Combating Transborder Crime.

Activities of the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime constitute a good example of Turkey's efforts at regional cooperation in combating illicit drug trafficking.

Now allow me to focus briefly on Africa, where drug trafficking is a relatively new phenomenon. That being said, its devastating effects are being felt across the entire continent, and nowhere more than in West Africa. Criminal organizations set on diversifying their illicit drug trade routes are aiming to manipulate the weak and unstable Government structures of that region. That is a dangerous threat that needs to be reversed, as the risks to regional stability are serious and require the immediate attention of the international community.

In the case of Africa, we have an opportunity to tackle the threat before it takes root and becomes a permanent problem in the subregions where it is now manifesting itself. We must seize the opportunity. Turkey thus emphasizes the need to develop a comprehensive approach to the efforts to combat drug trafficking in West Africa in particular. We welcome the special emphasis given by the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) to the issue.

As a nation that has long been at the forefront in the fight against drug trafficking, we understand full well the predicament of Western African nations, which find themselves stuck as a transit route for supply, on the one hand, and a large demand, on the other. The phenomenon is spreading through West Africa, and our experience dictates that only through effective, sustained and comprehensive international cooperation can it realistically be remedied. We believe that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), UNODC and UNOWA, together with the nations of the subregion, will need to place ever more emphasis on the issue. We look forward to the rapid and effective implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan.

In developing institutional capacity to combat illicit drug trafficking in the region in a context of shared responsibility, increased international technical and financial support will also be crucial.

In conclusion, I would like to stress once again the common and shared responsibility of the international community to fight drug trafficking, including in Africa. We hope that the Security Council's renewed commitment to address the threats posed by drug trafficking will re-energize international cooperation. The presidential statement, which we fully support, certainly sends the right message in that regard.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Uganda.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate. Your presence is clear testimony to the importance you and your country, Burkina Faso, attach to the need to urgently address the threat to international peace and security associated with drug trafficking. I also thank the Secretary-General for his statement, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for his briefing. I also recognize the presence of Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

This thematic debate provides an opportunity for the Security Council to comprehensively focus on drug trafficking as a threat to international peace and security. We have, in the past, addressed the issue of drug trafficking with respect to regional and country-specific situations. In particular, we have considered the West African subregion, and countries such as Afghanistan.

The dangers posed by transnational drug trafficking are widely recognized. The World Drug Report 2009, published by UNODC, highlights the linkage between drug trafficking and crime, and the dangers it poses to the security, stability and development of many affected countries.

The fact that drug trafficking has serious implications for security, health and other socio-economic facets are well known. In a June 2009 meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, which Uganda chairs, the head of the United Nations Office for West Africa, Ambassador Said Djinnit, highlighted the link between the spread of drug trafficking in the subregion and the risk of countries relapsing into conflict. That meeting also noted that, if not addressed immediately and effectively, the surge in drug trafficking in West Africa could jeopardize democratic governance in the region and lead to the expansion of criminal and terrorist networks.

It is therefore critical that actions and responses at the national, subregional and regional levels, and by the United Nations system and the wider international

community, be comprehensive and well coordinated. No country or region can manage on its own to control drug trafficking and its associated threats. There is need to take effective measures in countries where drugs and precursors are produced, on trafficking transit routes, and in drug destination countries. It is a fact that as long as the demand for drugs exists, especially in developed countries, drug trafficking networks will continue targeting countries with weak control measures and systems.

My delegation commends the role played by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Narcotics Control Board and other relevant United Nations organs and agencies in assisting Member States in the fight against drug trafficking. We welcome the joint efforts by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Office for West Africa, the Department of Political Affairs and INTERPOL in this endeavour.

It is encouraging that the World Drug Report 2009 shows a downward trend in the major drug markets in the developed countries. But new data that suggest an increase in the production and use of synthetic drugs in the developing countries, including in Africa, raises serious concerns.

My delegation requests the Secretary-General to consider mainstreaming the issue of drug trafficking as a factor in conflict prevention strategies and in overall assessment, planning and peacekeeping support.

In conclusion, it is clear that drug trafficking is a transnational and cross-cutting problem. I wish to reiterate the need to ensure that actions and strategies at the national, subregional and regional levels and by the wider international community to combat drug trafficking and organized crime are comprehensive and well coordinated.

We thank the delegation of Burkina Faso for preparing the presidential statement which we adopted this morning.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of France.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Burkina Faso for this opportunity for us to discuss the consequences of drug trafficking for international peace and security. I also thank Mr. Antonio Maria Costa for his briefing and take this opportunity to reaffirm my country's esteem and appreciation for his endeavours and those of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, which he heads. France endorses the statement to be made by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

The Security Council has repeatedly noted the role played by drug trafficking vis-à-vis the emergence of conflict in places such as Guinea-Bissau, Haiti and Afghanistan. With respect to Afghanistan, through resolution 1817 (2008), which was adopted as the result of a French initiative, the Council, inter alia, called for improved oversight of the international trade in chemical precursors. Such examples enable us to better understand the mechanisms that make the global drug problem a cross-cutting threat to international peace and security.

First of all, drug trafficking weakens States. It is accompanied by increased crime, including cartel wars and the development of transnational organized crime. It encourages corruption and money laundering, both of which weaken the capacity of Governments to take action. In some cases, it makes possible the financing of non-governmental armed groups. Drug trafficking never occurs by itself; it always goes hand in hand, ultimately, with arms trafficking, money laundering and even trafficking in human beings.

Because of its transnational nature, drug trafficking also contributes to the destabilization of entire regions. The Security Council has laid repeated stress on the threat that drugs pose to West Africa. The magnitude of the economic stakes involved in drugs, and their links with illicit financial flows and the gradual erosion of the very foundations of States, exacerbate conflicts between countries. Organized crime networks are created at the scale of West Africa, then grow and expand to the rest of the continent. They take advantage of the weakness of States in conflict situations and make the return to peace and economic development a more protracted and more difficult process for those States.

Finally, it is increasingly clear that drug trafficking, owing to its links with illicit international networks, jeopardizes international security beyond the regional level. The recent report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on Afghan opium trafficking demonstrates the role of drug trafficking in funding not only the insurgency in Afghanistan, but also the extremist groups in a number of countries in Central

Asia. The terrorist networks finance their activities partially through drug trafficking.

France welcomes the fact that today's debate enables the Security Council to assess the consequences of drug trafficking for international peace and security. We should now think about the operational ways to better take that factor into account in our strategies for the prevention and treatment of conflicts.

In that regard we attach great importance to regional actions. West Africa is an example, with the implementation of the initiative for the West African coast and the Economic Community of African States (ECOWAS) regional action plan on drug trafficking and organized crime. We also commend the adoption, on 24 November in Nairobi by 13 States, of the plan of action of East Africa, which has to do with trafficking in drugs, weapons, waste, counterfeit medicine, natural resources and persons, and piracy. There are other examples of regional initiatives, especially the Paris Pact.

Then we need to strengthen effective coordination among the United Nations, regional organizations such as ECOWAS and sectoral organizations, including INTERPOL, the World Health Organization and the World Customs Organization.

Lastly, in the Security Council we favour taking this issue of drug trafficking further into account in the analysis of conflicts, prevention strategies, integrated missions and peacekeeping operations. We will accord the greatest importance to all the elements that could be provided by the Secretariat in its various reports to the Council. We again commend the major contribution by the UNODC in the fight against cross-cutting threats, and we welcome the regular statements by its Executive Director to the Council.

More generally, we must seek to better mobilize and use all United Nations bodies competent in the area of fighting transnational threats. We need a global strategy, both geographically and in terms of the sectors covered. Only the United Nations can craft such a strategy and help with its implementation and follow-up.

The fight against drug trafficking is the subject of one of the most long-standing examples of international cooperation, whose one hundred years we commemorated last year. The conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988 provided an appropriate legal framework, which was usefully completed by the Palermo Convention on transnational organized crime and the Merida Convention against corruption. We call for the universalization and full and complete implementation of those legal instruments.

However, one must note that despite the efforts of the international community, the threats posed by drug trafficking to international security are stronger than ever. The Council therefore will need to remain involved in this issue. My country favours further discussions in this body in the near future.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): Mr. President, I wish to thank you and your country for this valuable initiative, which for the first time has presented this body with the opportunity to focus specifically on the complex issue of drug trafficking and its devastating consequences, including threats to national, subregional and regional stability and its impact on international security. We are happy to see you, Sir, chairing this open debate. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his thoughtful remarks and persuasive comments on this important subject, and Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for his extremely interesting and thought-provoking remarks and briefing.

My country has aligned itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

The fact that the Council has, in more than 200 debates the past twenty years or so, touched on this issue — though mainly in connection with various country-specific situations and in the context of other, more imminent threats — surely testifies to its wide prevalence and seriousness. With that in mind, and equally mindful of the extremely worrisome developments that this Council was recently informed about, particularly in West Africa, we wholeheartedly welcome this timely and comprehensive debate.

As demonstrated by numerous examples, drug production, trafficking, distribution and use is certainly not a stand-alone phenomenon but rather is part of a set of activities closely linked to a whole range of other illegal practices, such as trafficking in persons, arms smuggling and money laundering, that are carried out

almost with impunity in countries with a fragile political and social environment. That explosive cocktail represents a serious danger not only for the affected States that have recently emerged from conflict and are still pursuing delicate internal balances, but also for neighbouring countries, which can and often do become entangled in those activities.

At the same time, and in order to further expand their businesses, drug cartels often use resources from illegal drug trafficking to corrupt personnel from largely undeveloped and seriously underpaying State institutions. Those resources are also often used to finance conflict-related activities, including terrorism — as we have witnessed in a number of countries.

The most evident link between security threats and drug cultivation and trafficking is undoubtedly in Afghanistan, where, as many will agree, drugs and drug trafficking are used to support and fuel the insurgency. However, there are many other places, such as Haiti or West African States, where drug trafficking and cultivation not only have affected, or are affecting, national stability but also pose significant potential threats to regional and international security as well. Croatia expresses its deep concern with regard to recent reports about the increasing amount of drugs coming into West Africa and being consumed locally, not only because of the additional strain posed by the increased number of drug addicts to generally weak societies, but primarily because of the destruction and havoc it causes among young people — the main treasure of developing countries — who are already suffering from poverty and unemployment.

It is self-evident that illegal drug and other criminal organizations are successfully infiltrating and contaminating many vital segments of those struggling societies, including — as this Council has already heard — even the army.

Furthermore, Croatia shares the shock and surprise expressed by the UNODC Executive Director during his recent briefing of the Council at the revelation that West Africa is slowly being transformed from an important drug transit point to a source of the drug trade, as corroborated by large amounts of chemicals used in drug processing recently discovered in some West African locations. We urge the Council not to ignore the warning signs. For our part, we would strongly support immediate, coordinated action aimed at combating this scourge.

One thing is absolutely clear. Only strong national action, bolstered by transregional and international cooperation, has the potential to effectively counter this phenomenon. Common and shared responsibility, as we have heard many times today, and an integrated, multidisciplinary and balanced approach in full conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, should represent the basis for our resolute action. Croatia calls on all States to accede without delay to all relevant international instruments in this field, especially the three United Nations international drug control conventions and the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and faithfully implement their provisions.

Croatia fully supports the important endeavours undertaken by main United Nations bodies, especially the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in the fight against the illicit drug trade, as well as the activities of relevant United Nations agencies or bodies and other entities, in particular, the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, UNODC, and the International Narcotics Control Board. Similarly, we sincerely hope that this debate will help to clarify and further shape relations and coordination among United Nations actors and determine how this Council can add its weight and value to this issue.

We share the view that in order to effectively fight illicit drug trafficking and related criminal activities, it is necessary to provide assistance to affected Governments in certain key areas, including the development of alternative livelihoods and markets, enhancing national institutional capacities, enforcing prohibition of the illicit cultivation, manufacture and trafficking of drugs, and building up the effective use of intelligence.

Croatia encourages cooperation among affected countries, specifically in strengthening border controls and assisting in the flow and coordination of information between and among appropriate security and law enforcement agencies in order to maximize the effectiveness of all measures taken inside those countries. Conversely, we are also of the view that more efforts should be undertaken by Governments of illicit drug destination countries to reduce the demand for such drugs.

The efficient implementation of a comprehensive approach calls for integrated action within the wider context of efforts in the areas of security, governance, the rule of law, human rights and economic and social reconstruction and development. We strongly support security sector reform processes in affected States, as well as the emerging practice of including drug trafficking as an important part of country-specific analysis, mission assessments, operations planning and mandate renewals. We particularly welcome the growing prominence of drug-related issues in the mandates of newly established integrated offices.

We would like to emphasize the important role that subregional, regional and international organizations, in particular the Economic Community of West African States and INTERPOL, and civil society are playing in the common fight against the illegal drug trade and related organized criminal activities. We encourage their further mutual cooperation, and cooperation with all of those who are involved in this complex exercise.

Finally, we welcome and support the presidential statement adopted today and thank the delegation of Burkina Faso for its leadership and all delegations for the work they invested.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of China.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank Burkina Faso for taking the initiative to hold an open debate in the Security Council on the question of drug trafficking under the agenda item "Peace and security in Africa". Mr. President, I welcome your presence here in New York today to preside over our meeting in person. I would also like to welcome the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and Mr. Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), to our meeting.

The Outcome Document adopted at the 2005 World Summit emphasizes that drugs, transnational crime and terrorism have negative effects on global development, peace, security and human rights. The international community should take collective action to tackle those problems. That fully demonstrates the great importance the international community attaches to resolving the issue of drugs.

Currently, drug trafficking is still spreading unabated in some parts of the world. It is an acute issue that threatens peace and security in some regions, particularly in West Africa. In recent years, the Security Council has been repeatedly briefed by United Nations West African regional offices and UNODC. Today's open debate in the Council on the question of drug trafficking in West Africa under the agenda item on peace and security in Africa is of particular realistic significance.

Drug trafficking is the main cause of the spread of drugs in today's world. Cracking down on drug trafficking requires that all countries strengthen international cooperation. As indicated in the briefings to the Council over time by the Secretariat and the UNODC, a trafficking route from Latin America to Western Europe and North America via West Africa has developed through international drug trafficking activities. Taking advantage of weak government control in some West African countries, international drug traffickers use that region for transit for drug trafficking activities, and the countries in the region fall victim as a result. That situation not only gives rise to organized crime activities but also affects social stability and security in those countries.

In today's world, with any consumer good, consumption gives rise to demand, and demand generates a market and stimulates production. As a special consumer good, narcotic drugs are no exception. Due to the existence of a relatively stable consumer market for drugs in some developed countries, international drug trafficking cartels, prompted by the huge profits to be made, go to any lengths to organize drug production and trafficking. The areas where drugs are produced or that serve as transit routes are often economically underdeveloped. Therefore the fight for international drug control pivots on international cooperation and must adhere to the principle of shared responsibility.

It is incumbent upon West African countries to strengthen legislation and law enforcement to strictly crack down on international drug trafficking activities. Developed countries — where drug consumption mainly takes place — have strong capacity and government control and are duty bound to shoulder the moral responsibility to eliminate consumption of drugs, thus doing their part to advance the international fight for drug control.

In international cooperation on drugs control, the role of regional organizations, which are at the forefront, should be brought into full play. In recent years the Security Council has on many occasions heard Mr. Costa's briefings on the drug problem in West Africa, and we are deeply concerned about that grave situation. Some West African countries have just extricated themselves from conflict. They face difficulties in economic development, youth employment and rule of law capacity-building, and they are susceptible to inroads by international drug traffickers. In some situations, drug trafficking has even enflamed conflicts in the countries concerned and posed a grave threat to the peace and stability of the West African region.

The concern of the international community over the peace and security situation in that region should be translated into concrete measures to help West African countries and regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States to strengthen their anti-drugs capacity and enhance government monitoring and control capacities and judicial and military capacities against drug-related crimes. At the same time, the international community has the duty to help underdeveloped countries to gradually develop their economies, create job opportunities and improve the livelihood of their peoples, so as to raise the awareness and capacity of young people to say "no" to the temptation of drugs. That is the fundamental way — and the only way — that international drug control can make a real difference.

International drug control calls for an even stronger United Nations role in communication and coordination. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the UNODC have done a great deal in fighting global drug trafficking and have made much progress. However, given the grave situation stemming from the spread of drugs, international efforts are far from adequate. Drug crimes are a malignant tumour on the body of human society. The fight against drugs is therefore a noble lifesaving cause.

As a major forum for promoting international cooperation and safeguarding world peace, the United Nations should play a bigger role in this fight. We support the relevant functional bodies of the United Nations in continuing the discussions on this subject and hope that the Security Council will continue to give its attention to the work in this area.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank you, Sir, for your initiative to organize this meeting of the Security Council on the fight against the illicit traffic in drugs and for the adoption of today's important presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/32).

Drug trafficking poses a serious and growing threat to international peace and security. Together with organized crime and terrorism, drug trafficking has grown to dangerous proportions in various regions of the world. We support the resolve of the Security Council, the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, to assist in resolving this pernicious problem.

The grave drug threat emerging from the territory of Afghanistan is of a global nature. The Russian Federation believes that the impetus for mobilizing international cooperation in countering the Afghan drug threat lies in the decisions adopted within the framework of the Paris-Moscow process, under United Nations auspices. The time has come to consider how to build on and complement these decisions, taking into account the latest trends in the evolving drug situation in and around Afghanistan. In that regard, we favour the convening of a third ministerial conference within the Paris-Moscow process in late 2010.

There is a growing and urgent need to create buffer zones around Afghanistan to ensure anti-drug, counter-terrorist and financial security. A call to develop broad and effective international cooperation consonant with that initiative is contained in the outcome document of the special conference on Afghanistan held in Moscow in March under the auspices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

We believe that one example of effective cooperation among States in curbing the illegal flow of drugs is Operation Channel, carried out under the auspices of the Collective Security Treaty Organization. The list of participants in the Operation grows ever year, and its purposes reflect the global nature of drug trafficking and its nexus with other types of criminal activity. In 2009, the Operation sought to close off the conduits for smuggled Afghan

opiates into the territories of States of the Eurasian region, synthetic drugs from Europe and cocaine from Latin America; to curb the illegal flow of precursors into Central Asian States and Afghanistan; to seize illicitly trafficked weapons, munitions and explosives; and to counter the laundering of drug revenues.

The problem of drug trafficking has also deteriorated in West Africa. Exploiting the weakness of existing West African counter-narcotics mechanisms, porous borders and feeble national security sectors, international criminality has turned that subregion into a major new transit hub for cocaine. The Economic Community of West African States and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime must step up their efforts in that regard through the development of operational counter-narcotics programmes. The United Nations Office for West Africa should pursue its practical contributions to the work in this area.

We consider the problem of drug smuggling and associated transnational organized crime to be one of the most serious threats to the security of African countries, in particular those in transition towards recovery following destructive armed conflict.

It may be concluded that the problem of the spread of drugs has become global, and that more robust measures to eradicate it are called for.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I should like to applaud the initiative of Burkina Faso to organize today's debate on drug trafficking as a threat to international security. I should also like to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General and Mr. Antonio Maria Costa for their statements.

Drug trafficking poses a serious threat to international peace and security. We share the deep concern about the increasing linkage between drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime, such as trafficking in small arms and persons, money-laundering, corruption and cybercrime. In some areas, drug trafficking finances terrorist activities.

Drug trafficking has a highly destabilizing impact, particularly on States in conflict and post-conflict situations. Given their vulnerable and weak governance, those countries become easy targets as transit points for international organized crime groups. Instability creates the risk of relapse into conflict, while instability in one country may spread to neighbouring countries and threaten regional stability. Once it has penetrated a soft target, it will easily spread to an entire region.

Drug trafficking also decomposes the social fabric from inside. With profits from drug trafficking, small arms and weapons proliferate, while soldiers — including child soldiers — can easily fall into addiction and become vicious killers. This process prolongs conflict itself, prevents the establishment of the rule of law and impedes sustainable development. It is therefore most appropriate for the Security Council to discuss problems related to drug trafficking from the point of view of securing stability and preventing conflict.

Such critical security consequences of drug trafficking are manifested most acutely in West Africa. Many States of the region are still in fragile situations as they emerge from conflict. Due to the weakness of their regulatory institutions and judicial systems, these countries remain attractive to those exploiting illicit drug trafficking across national borders. West Africa remains largely a transit point from South America to Europe, but the transit of large amounts of narcotics is posing a growing threat of local addiction.

The number of drug seizures in the region seems to be diminishing. We may take this as a positive sign that the collective efforts and regulations have had a positive effect. However, new and disturbing trends are emerging. Trafficking routes may merely have been displaced further South along the West African coast. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and INTERPOL have found large amounts of precursor chemicals for drug processing to convert pasta basica into high-grade cocaine. Intra-continental drug trafficking between East and West Africa has even been noted. We should conclude from this that drug trafficking is seriously undermining efforts in West Africa to build safe, sound and prosperous societies. The situation is becoming a threat to international security, and concerted efforts are necessary.

In West Africa, a regional response is essential in order to break this negative cycle. First of all, we need to universalize the international legal framework to address illicit drug trafficking. More than 180 countries, including many in West Africa, have becomes parties to three United Nations conventions: the Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the Convention on

Psychotropic Substances and the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. These agreements are cornerstones of the international effort to combat drug trafficking. We should focus on effective implementation of those Conventions in West Africa.

Secondly, the countries of the region must commit themselves to enforcing tighter border controls and customs, anti-corruption policies and internal security. The international community needs to provide those countries with capacity-building support through the training of experts, the sharing of information and the supply of logistical support.

Thirdly, it is critical for the countries of West Africa to coordinate their efforts to tackle drug trafficking with comprehensive peacebuilding strategies. In countries emerging from conflict, the military and police are frequently integrated without proper vetting and training. In order to prevent the infiltration of illicit drugs into the security services, it is important to take measures to reform the military and police and to establish the rule of law. To prevent former soldiers and young people from becoming involved in the drug trade, it is important to reintegrate ex-combatants and create job opportunities for youth. Disarmament and the collection of small arms are also important to preventing organized crime groups from acquiring more advanced weapons.

There is clearly an important linkage between counter-narcotics policy and successful peacebuilding efforts. The integrated peacebuilding strategies for Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau place a high priority on counter-narcotics measures, together with the promotion of security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the integration of ex-combatants and job creation for youth.

This linkage for preventing the recurrence of conflict should be emphasized in future discussions of regional issues that the Security Council will take up, and also in the Peacebuilding Commission. Various United Nations entities are supporting the implementation of the regional action plan of the Economic Community of West African States to address illicit drug trafficking and organized crime. We wish the activities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Office for West Africa, UNODC and INTERPOL to be better coordinated and strengthened. They may draw useful lessons from other regional operations, for instance, the Asia-Pacific Operational Drug Enforcement Conference, to further promote regional cooperation.

In conclusion, the drug problem is discussed in many United Nations forums, including the Security Council and the General Assembly. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs adopted this year a Political Declaration and a 10-year Action Plan, stretching until 2019. I believe that today's debate in the Security Council provides a broader security perspective and insights with which the entire United Nations system may more efficiently — but also effectively and comprehensively — address the drug trafficking problem.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I wish, Sir, to congratulate your country on its assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of December. Your presence here this morning and your organization of this important debate demonstrate the importance Burkina Faso attaches to the issue of drug trafficking. They also illustrate the commitment of African countries to fight this plague with determination and political will.

The participation of the Secretary-General earlier this morning shows that the United Nations is fully aware of the need to address the issue as a matter of priority, given its potential consequences for affected countries and regions. I also thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, for his informative presentation.

By its very nature, the fight against international drug trafficking requires a concerted effort by all countries affected by it. A consensus approach has already been devised by the international community to deal with this scourge. It recognizes that countries of production, transit and use of illicit drugs have shared responsibilities in preventing and combating the problem. Any sustainable effort against this threat can succeed only if it properly addresses all the links of the international drug trade. Real solutions require multidimensional actions, with the engagement of key players at the national, regional and international levels.

That is why international drug trafficking is, first and foremost, a matter for international cooperation against transnational organized crime. The 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, the 1988 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and the 2000 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime constitute the primary framework for this endeavour. Institution-building and support for the development of law enforcement capacity are key elements to ensure their implementation. In some armed conflicts, and even in countries emerging from conflict, transnational organized drug trafficking may affect national and international peace and security. An example that easily comes to mind is the financing of terrorist or rebel groups through drug trafficking. If and when confronted with those extreme situations, the Security Council will have to determine the most appropriate measures to address them, taking into account the specificities of each case. It goes without saying that national Governments and the international community as a whole should do their utmost to prevent the problem from reaching such alarming proportions.

Drug trafficking tends to thrive in a context of socio-economic deprivation. Economic growth and employment, especially for youth, are therefore particularly relevant in addressing some of the underlying conditions that allow the problem to develop in vulnerable countries. It is essential to act vigorously both in the fight against drug trafficking networks and in the promotion of alternative livelihoods for disenfranchised populations that may be pushed into the drug economy.

Support for the fight against drug trafficking has been designated as one of the priority areas in the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Guinea Bissau, adopted last year in the country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, which the Permanent Representative of Brazil has the honour of chairing. The ongoing review process of that strategy has confirmed the importance that the country itself and the members of the Commission attach to this issue. It is noteworthy that the country-specific configuration for Sierra Leone has also taken up this issue as an important challenge to the peacebuilding process. Those two configurations organized a joint meeting earlier this year dedicated to this matter. That initiative highlighted the importance of coordinated action at the regional level.

In this regard, we look forward to the implementation of the regional operational plan of the Economic Community of West African States, an initiative that deserves unwavering support. We also very much appreciate the West Africa Coast Initiative, developed by UNODC, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Office for West Africa and INTERPOL. The engagement of the African Union will strengthen this process of regional cooperation.

We are all aware that progress in combating drug trafficking, preventing it from further threatening our societies and addressing its root causes will be made if national Governments, the various parts of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations not only act with common purpose but also improve the coordination of their respective actions. This is no small challenge. If we succeed in this collective effort, however, we will be able to avoid situations in which the Security Council needs to be involved. That should be our common goal.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): It is good to see you, Mr. President, sharing in this important debate.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. Turkey, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

This debate is indeed very timely. Drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime are posing increasingly difficult challenges to international peace and security. Apart from its devastating health and socio-economic effects, the narcotics business contributes to international instability and constitutes a threat to the security of States. In recent years, there has been a growing concern about a possible nexus between the financing of terrorist groups and narcotics profits. In some parts of the world, the huge profits generated through drug trafficking fuel corruption and undermine State authority, economic development and the rule of law.

While the responsibility to address the narcotics problem rests primarily with Member States, the challenge is international and requires global and regional cooperation. The 2005 World Summit stressed the need to overcome the global narcotics problem through international cooperation and national strategies.

The United Nations and its various agencies have taken important steps to strengthen the international response to drug trafficking, through both international regulation and assistance in capacity-building. These efforts must continue. The European Union (EU) thanks the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for its important work to assist Member States in building capacity to address illicit drugs, crime and terrorism. Efforts must be integrated in peacekeeping operations, peacebuilding support and development cooperation. The European Union stands ready to support the United Nations in developing a more robust answer to new demands in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, including addressing drug trafficking, other forms of organized crime and corruption.

The European Union Drugs Action Plan for 2009-2012 outlines European Union priorities in cooperating with third countries and regions. The Action Plan seeks to enhance international cooperation, inter alia, to address trafficking routes and prevent the diversion of chemical production. The European Union has declared drug trafficking, especially the West and Central African routes for storage and transit, a priority in the fight against organized crime. We are addressing the transregional nature of drug trafficking through a global programme covering Latin America, the Caribbean and West Africa, as well as some Maghreb countries. Efforts are undertaken in cooperation with UNODC.

Transnational threats such as drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime affect all countries, but are particularly devastating for developing States and countries in transition. In West Africa, criminal entrepreneurs have exploited vulnerabilities in the wake of armed conflicts across the region. Adding to the problem, Latin American drug traffickers have linked up with West African crime groups. The threat assessment recently published by UNODC paints a grim picture of the threat of organized crime to West Africa and to all of us. A similar picture is painted by the European Police Office. This shows the truly international character of the challenge we are facing.

As the link between Latin American drug cartels and West African traffickers is becoming more apparent, the EU has continued its support to Latin American efforts in relation to drug supply reduction, while at the same time trying to improve intelligence coordination and practical cooperation between the two regions.

An important element of the European Union's efforts in West Africa is the EU mission in support of security sector reform in Guinea-Bissau. The EU and its member States are also contributing to the struggle against drug trafficking in West Africa through some 70 projects aimed at institution-building, policy support and law enforcement.

The European Union reaffirms its support to the Economic Community of West African States Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking and organized crime. In July, United Nations agencies, in cooperation with INTERPOL, launched the West Africa Coast Initiative to work in synergy to support this regional plan. This was an important step towards strengthening the coherence of the international response to organized crime in the region.

Apart from West Africa and Latin America, the European Union is focusing its efforts on helping Afghanistan to address its drug trafficking problem. There have been some positive developments during the past two years, including a decrease in opium poppy cultivation and greater regional counter-narcotics cooperation. However, the production and trafficking of drugs remain important sources of finance for insurgent groups and fuel for corruption.

The European Union supports the National Drug Control Strategy and will maintain the counter-narcotics dialogue with Afghanistan. Our joint efforts are focused on law enforcement, public health and rural development programmes, including the promotion of alternative development. Regional stability is also of key importance. The Council of the European Union recently adopted a plan for strengthened action in Afghanistan and Pakistan. We will continue to pursue cooperation initiatives and strongly support UNODC activities in the region.

The fight against the illicit trafficking of drugs must focus on all aspects of supply and demand, as

well as on illicit financial flows. Better regulatory frameworks and extended efforts in building national capacities in the areas of rule of law, socio-economic stability and public health are all central elements in meeting this challenge.

Let me assure the Council that the European Union will continue to be an active partner in international and regional efforts to address the threat posed by drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime also in the period to come.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Colombia.

Ms. Blum (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, and your country on presiding over the Security Council during the month of December. We commend your initiative to convene this debate on the challenge represented by the world drug problem, under the agenda item "Peace and security in Africa". Likewise, we welcome the presentation made by Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The conclusions reached at the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in March are particularly relevant in view of the challenge that the world drug problem continues to pose 11 years after the convening of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. In the Political Declaration and the Action Plan adopted in March this year, the high-level segment of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs reaffirmed the fundamental principle that each link of the world drug problem must be addressed within the framework of common and shared responsibility and through international cooperation.

The achievements of the Colombian Government in the fight against the global drug problem over more than three decades are widely recognized. The Colombian State, through a strategy based on taking action against illegal groups, reducing demand, weakening the economic structure of drug trafficking and reducing supply with an emphasis on the eradication of illicit crops, has achieved sound results.

The UNODC *World Drug Report 2009* recognizes the results achieved in decreasing illegal crops in Colombia. Since 2002 to date, the manual eradication and spraying of illegal crops have increased by 72 per cent. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the coca cultivation area in Colombia, which had reached 160,000 hectares early in the decade, was reduced in 2008 to 81,000 hectares, representing a 50 per cent decrease. Moreover, UNODC estimates in its report that the total volume of the potential production of cocaine in Colombia decreased by 28 per cent from 2007 to 2008, an even greater decrease than that observed in the cultivation area.

As a consequence of the achievements in Colombia, among other factors, the adaptability of transnational organized crime has led to the geographic dispersal and extension to a greater number of countries of the cultivation, production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs. In its comprehensive and determined fight against the global drug problem, Colombia has gained experience and capabilities which it has actively shared through various cooperation projects. We have addressed requests for training and technical assistance from countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, Central America, West Africa and Asia. The conclusions of the Regional Summit on the World Drug Problem, Security and Cooperation, held in Cartagena in 2008, give us a solid base for tackling the problem we are discussing in today's debate. At that Summit, a number of countries from Latin America and the Caribbean reaffirmed, among other things, their commitment to strengthening mechanisms for technical and institutional coordination and experience-sharing, with a view to reducing illicit cultivation and the production of illicit drugs. Furthermore, the Political Declaration and Action Plan adopted at the Ministerial Conference of the Economic Community of West African States, held in October 2008, offer a significant contribution.

The two meetings I have mentioned offered opportunities that promoted interregional dialogue, which is a valuable instrument in the fight against the global drug problem. We appreciate the role that the United Nations can play in increasing and facilitating such dialogue.

Colombia has joined the efforts of the international community aimed at tackling the problem of drug trafficking to Europe via the West coast of Africa. We are participating actively in an initiative for cooperation and information exchange between State security organs against the trafficking of cocaine from Latin America to West Africa.

On February of this year, Colombia hosted the first meeting with African countries organized with the support of the United Nations, the European Commission, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission of the Organization of American States, the American Police Community, the Latin American and Caribbean Community on Police Intelligence and the Colombian National Police. Nineteen countries participated in this meeting, including seven from the African continent. During that meeting, training in specialized techniques to combat drug trafficking was provided, and channels of communication were opened to facilitate the exchange of information.

With regard to the problem of the trafficking of drugs to Europe through the West Coast of Africa, operational coordination, while indispensable, is only a first step. Efforts must be focused on developing coordinated strategies to address the various components of the problem. The capacity of United Nations is invaluable in the coordination of these efforts.

The experience of Colombia confirms that only through a balanced approach to decreasing both the supply of and the demand for drugs will it be possible to move forward efficiently and progressively in the fight against the world drug problem.

It is indispensable to tackle all the links. All the countries involved, be they producer, transit or consumer countries, must tackle the various aspects of the problem in unison and with the same resolve.

Colombia reaffirms its unwavering commitment to continue working at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, through effective cooperation activities that address the transnational, dynamic and multidimensional nature of this crime.

The President: (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Senegal.

Mr. Badji (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to warmly congratulate you and to express my profound gratitude for the commendable initiative on the part of Burkina Faso, as President of the Security Council for the month of December, to organize, under the agenda item entitled "Peace and security in Africa", an open debate on the subject of drug trafficking as a threat to international security. This timely initiative and those that will emerge over the next three weeks crown the work completed by our sister Republic of Burkina Faso over the past 24 months in the Security Council.

The issue of drug trafficking is one of great urgency and is at the very heart of the concerns of the international community. That is why my country, Senegal, attaches particular interest to today's debate. The importance that we attach to the consideration of the issue of drug trafficking reflects the scale of the multiple and multiform threats to which this scourge exposes us. It goes without saying that drug trafficking involves well structured international networks that have ramifications in almost all parts of the world and carry out activities so dangerous that they undermine the authority of States and endanger the lives and wellbeing of thousands of human beings.

Beyond drug addiction, which is just one of this scourge's countless devastating effects and which poses a genuine problem to public health, the problem also has disastrous economic and financial consequences. The profits of illicit trafficking, which are often laundered so that they can be invested in the legal economy, pose a real economic problem. In particular, the weakening of control by public authorities over the economy when significant sums of illegally obtained money are put into the financial system is a major cause for concern, in particular for developing countries. This threat is all the more worrying in that it has now been established that drug trafficking goes hand in hand with a number of other criminal activities which, in turn, fuel transnational organized crime.

Today, there can be no doubt that the substantial profits at stake in drug trafficking attract numerous criminal groups that rely upon it as the principal source of funding for their activities. The danger is so great, as many reports of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime have stated, that a link has been established between drug trafficking and the funding of armed conflicts and terrorism in many regions. The connections between drug trafficking and other criminal activities, such as money-laundering, corruption, arms trafficking, trafficking in human beings and terrorism, reflects the magnitude and complexity of this scourge, which, without a doubt, is a serious threat to international peace and security.

Stepping up international efforts to fight drug trafficking and related activities has led, among other

things, to the improvement of the international legal framework in this area. While the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, known as the Vienna Convention, was the first international response to the proliferation of this scourge, the adoption of international instruments for the fight against organized transnational crime and corruption would allow us to repress these related criminal activities. Those include specifically the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, known as the Palermo Convention of 2000, and the United Nations Convention against Corruption of 2003. In the same vein, several initiatives and commitments have been undertaken at the regional, subregional and national levels to curb the phenomenon.

Despite all the efforts made in that regard to fight drug trafficking, we must acknowledge, as part of our condemnation of it, that that evil remains undiminished and a source of great concern. Worse, the phenomenon has become even more complex, given that the criminal networks involved in that illicit trafficking make use of developments in the area of information and communications technologies to enhance their organization. Thus, those criminals, who have vast resources, are not lacking in imagination and sophisticated methods to deceive the vigilance of the most effective control systems.

My delegation remains deeply concerned about the surge in drug trafficking. Our concern is even greater since Africa, in particular West Africa, is today becoming the hub of international drug trafficking. The numbers speak for themselves. According to the 2008 report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, entitled "Drug trafficking as a security threat in West Africa", the amount of cocaine seized per year in the region is estimated at around 50 tons.

While it appears clearly in that report that the drug cartels of Latin America are preying on West Africa, the primary reason is to be found in the institutional weaknesses of certain States in the subregion. Those States must be helped as they are burdened by the weight of poverty and, moreover, are experiencing political instability. Thus, drug trafficking throws a spark into a region that is already highly flammable and poses a real threat to security.

Although Africa does not produce such drugs, it suffers more seriously the consequences and implications of the illicit trafficking in those products, which could weaken its already fragile economy and poison its working population, primarily made up of young people. Thus, we need to urgently step up our efforts to address the underlying causes of that region's vulnerability. It is therefore necessary to provide technical assistance in order to develop and strengthen the national capacities of those countries so that they can more effectively prevent and fight drug trafficking and organized transnational crime in general.

In that regard, I welcome the project entitled the West Africa Coast Initiative, led by the United Nations Office for West Africa in partnership with UNODC and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which seeks to strengthen capacities with regard to applying the law in four pilot countries, namely, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and Liberia. The Initiative is consonant with the goals of the Economic Community of West African States Plan of Action against drug trafficking, adopted in October 2008.

However, so as to take into account the full extent of the fight against the drug scourge and its various aspects, our actions must not be limited to simply strengthening national capacities in the area of regulation and monitoring. It must also seek to tackle the problems related to the poverty, underdevelopment and political and social instability that encourage the spread of that evil.

Since drug trafficking is a transnational phenomenon, a synergy of actions at the regional and international levels is also necessary to confront it effectively and lastingly. Clearly, that entails strengthening and improving international cooperation, especially in the areas of mutual and police assistance and the exchange of information, and also, in particular, coordinating the actions of all entities and bodies involved in the fight.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt): It is with pleasure that I deliver this statement in my capacity as Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). I would like to start by thanking Their Excellencies the President and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso for their initiative in calling for this important debate on drug trafficking as a threat to international security, and the Secretary-General for his valuable contribution to today's debate. I would also like to thank Mr. Antonio

Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, for his comprehensive report, schedules and maps. I would like also to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all those who have lost their lives in the ongoing combat against drug trafficking.

The Non-Aligned Movement recognizes the challenge posed to the international community by the growth in illicit cross-border and cross-regional drug trafficking. In that context, we note with appreciation the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes aimed at providing the needed financial and technological assistance to Member countries, especially in Africa, to support and develop their national capabilities and to reinforce their ability to develop their human resources and national institutions so as to face the devastating challenges that have plagued our international community today, namely, drug trafficking, corruption and transnational organized crime in all their forms.

In a globalized world characterized by interwoven and successive economic, political and social changes, there is a need to address our existing challenges in a comprehensive and integrated manner, with the aim of maximizing our benefits and mitigating their repercussions on our societies. The phenomenon of globalization, coupled with continuous technological advancements, imposes serious challenges to our ability and efforts to combat drug trafficking.

Also, we cannot discuss efforts to combat the cultivation, production and trafficking of drugs without addressing other forms of transnational organized crime, as well as the laundering of the proceeds derived from them. Furthermore, it is no longer sufficient to combat illicit traditional drugs, the cultivation areas of which have decreased globally over the past year. It is also of paramount importance that we recognize that technological advancements have facilitated the development of new synthetic drugs that are deadlier, easier to transport and smuggle, and less costly to manufacture, resulting in an increase in the number of centres for the global production of such toxins.

Therefore, we need to intensify international cooperation against that new challenge in close cooperation with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

This was reaffirmed by the most recent Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, which reiterated that more effective measures must be taken to prevent, combat and eradicate the world drug problem in all its aspects. It also acknowledged that no single Government or organization can successfully combat this menace alone, given that criminal organizations linked to drug trafficking operate collectively and employ a transboundary approach, and are increasing their traffic routes and distribution methods. Cooperation, coordination and committed action by all countries and regions are therefore essential to curb this phenomenon.

The Summit also reemphasized that the fight against the world drug problem is a common and shared responsibility that should be tackled in a multilateral framework. It can be effectively dealt with only by enhancing regional and international cooperation in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and other provisions of international law, particularly respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of States; the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs; and the principle of equality. Such cooperation requires increased efforts to prevent and combat all aspects of the world drug problem, including demand reduction, and to formulate suitable solutions, including sustainable alternative development programmes and strategies.

Drug traffickers are systematically taking advantage of open borders and weak security institutions in some regions. The past few years have highlighted the fact that this is the case in Africa, particularly West Africa, where several Member States are recovering from prolonged conflicts and rebuilding their institutions and capabilities. The explosion in illicit drug production and trade is having a negative effect on overall sustainable development efforts in Africa.

The proliferation of this phenomenon is also a threat to security on the continent, as trafficking proceeds are either laundered through national financial systems, deeply undermining their reputation and crippling their development, or used to acquire small arms and light weapons. Since these are one of the main factors fuelling conflict, instability and terrorism in Africa, they threaten African countries with a slide back into conflict.

Furthermore, recent increases in illicit drug consumption, especially of synthetic drugs, are having a negative effect on African efforts — conducted in cooperation with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and in collaboration with African regional and subregional organizations and institutions, such as the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) — to achieve the internationally agreed development goals set out in the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, especially the Millennium Development Goals.

The Non-Aligned Movement Summit at Sharm el-Sheikh reaffirmed that trafficking in persons also continues to pose a serious challenge to humanity and requires a concerted international response. It urged all States to increase their efforts to combat trafficking in persons, by actively contributing, among other things, to shaping a global partnership against these inhumane crimes. Such a partnership would be aimed at improving coordination and information exchange, especially in protecting the rights of victims of trafficking. The United Nations therefore needs to develop a coherent and comprehensive approach to addressing this crime; this can be done by a process of consultations among Member States, launched by the President of the General Assembly, on a global plan of action on combating trafficking in persons, to be adopted by the Assembly. Moreover, NAM is appreciative of the efforts currently being undertaken by the Assembly in this area, and commends the leading role that UNODC is playing in countering this serious crime.

NAM believes that directing full attention to the worsening illicit drug trade in West Africa is urgent. It is high time for the international community, in full collaboration with the United Nations, to give its unequivocal support to the efforts of West African States and ECOWAS to combat this crime. Political leaders in the region have affirmed their commitment to this fight by adopting the ECOWAS Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa. ECOWAS has also begun developing structures and adopting strategies and programmes to deal with the multifaceted aspects of illicit drug trafficking and production. Now it is time for the international community to reinforce these efforts by rendering full political, financial, and technical support to the subregion in order to effectively and efficiently deploy every instrument and mechanism at its disposal, and to develop those still needed to curb the drug problem in West Africa.

In this context, NAM emphasizes the need to improve the existing partnership between Africa and the United Nations, through the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and UNODC. This must be done in a comprehensive and integrated manner, building on accumulated experiences and lessons learned, and in full cooperation with African regional organizations and the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, as well as other entities.

The success of peacebuilding efforts in Africa, particularly West Africa, also remains dependent on the level of support extended by the United Nations to African countries and regional structures, aimed at reinforcing national and regional institutions, in order to promptly and effectively implement various action plans and strategies for confronting transnational crimes and facing challenges to sustainable development.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3.15 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.20 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6233 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6233rd meeting

Tuesday, 8 December 2009, 3.15 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Yoda/Mr. Kafando	(Burkina Faso)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Lutterotti
	China	Mr. Du Xiaocong
	Costa Rica	Mr. Artiñano
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Araud
	Japan	Mr. Ashiki
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Gebreel
	Mexico	Mr. Puente
	Russian Federation	Mr. Shcherbak
	Turkey	Mr. Gümrükçü
	Uganda	Mr. Ociti
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

Drug trafficking as a threat to international security

Letter dated 30 November 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2009/615)

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09-63874 (E)

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The meeting resumed at 3.25 p.m.

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Bolivia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Loayza Barea (Bolivia) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in French*): I would like to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to welcome you, Mr. President, and to express the Kingdom of Morocco's appreciation for your choice topic to highlight the presidency of Burkina Faso in December. The choice of this topic is neither meaningless nor accidental. It clearly illustrates the concern of many countries, especially African countries, regarding the magnitude that drug trafficking has attained and its consequences for the health of its victims and for development and political stability in affected States.

Drug trafficking has become one of the world's most pressing transnational threats. No country can consider itself safe from its harmful effects. It is a threat because of its scope, its cross-cutting nature and the people involved in it. The $400 billion per year that the drug trade represents is in and of itself very revealing in terms of the threat that it poses to our common security.

The situation in Africa, particularly in West Africa, is of concern because of the extent of this scourge. The figure of 50 to 60 tons of traffic per year, cited this morning by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), reveals the gravity of this trade and the need to address it.

The situation is all the more threatening in that it affects a region that is fragile in terms of peace and stability and where a number of countries are emerging from many years of armed conflict. This is of concern on several fronts, and requires States and our universal Organization to act, as the threats posed by this phenomenon are twofold.

On the one hand, there is the risk that a number of countries will be destabilized in the region by an ill-intentioned use of the proceeds of trafficking to undermine the Governments in place, finance subversive actions or even carry out terrorist attacks. On the other hand, as international cooperation to fight narcotics trafficking has developed, there has been a parallel and increasing collusion among drug cartels, small arms traffickers and those who exploit clandestine migration routes. Such groups will stop at nothing, including terrorism and hostage-taking, to maintain their illegal source of income.

The major itineraries for the traffic in drugs, in particular cocaine, have evolved. Given the steady international demand for cocaine and the strengthening of measures to intercept the drug along traditional routes, traffickers have turned towards West Africa. The choice of this region is incredibly unfortunate, as our region has just painfully emerged from a decade of endemic violence.

As seen at the 2008 Praia summit of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), States of the region have demonstrated their commitment to curbing this traffic. However, their efforts are not enough in and of themselves. Financial, technical and training support will also be necessary to the success of their efforts.

Fighting drug trafficking in West Africa and its many implications for regional and international stability require a renewed commitment on the part of all Member States, given the indivisible nature of security, in order to assist States of the region to develop their capacity for cooperation against organized crime, whose connections to terrorist networks are now known to all.

My country welcomes the initiatives carried out by ECOWAS, with the support of the United Nations and the international community, to reverse the trend in

this harmful trafficking, as well as the first positive results of these efforts witnessed since last year. This initiative must be pursued and broadened to include other destination countries in the larger Sahara area, which stretches from West to East Africa.

Strengthening regional and subregional cooperation in combating drug trafficking in West Africa requires a multilateral effort in which the international community should invest in a resolute approach to curbing the phenomenon. In this respect, we must note that the critical areas for building West African capacity to combat this scourge include the provision of technical assistance by donors, the improvement of prevention and treatment of addiction, and the strengthening of cooperation in detection and interdiction. Given the density and international ramifications of active local narcotics trafficking networks, States of the region must cooperate with INTERPOL.

Given its geographical position, its proximity to West Africa and the importance it attaches to stability in that sensitive region of our continent, the Kingdom of Morocco follows with particular attention the situation in the vast Sahelo-Saharan region, in particular the alarming developments in the trafficking of arms, narcotics and persons and the recent terrorist acts directed against the people — and sometimes the States — of the region.

This situation requires the international community to take a three-pronged approach. First, the ongoing conflicts and disputes in the region must be resolved; secondly, countries emerging from conflict must be bolstered and supported in their political and economic reconstruction; and thirdly, bilateral, regional and international cooperation to eliminate trafficking must be strengthened.

Beyond such urgent measures, the true asset in combating these scourges remains socio-economic development and the establishment of economic governance and the rule of law. We hope that the response of the international community will be commensurate with the challenge and our shared responsibility.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mali.

Mr. Daou (Mali) (*spoke in French*): First and foremost, I wish to extend to you, Mr. President, my delegation's congratulations on your initiative to hold this open Security Council debate on a phenomenon that is one of the priorities on the international agenda. In convening this special meeting devoted to the problem of drug trafficking as a threat to international security, your country, Burkina Faso, has given us the opportunity to hold a constructive debate on a subject that is of major concern to the international community, in particular West Africa and the Sahelo-Saharan belt. These regions have regrettably become a hub for international drug trafficking.

The scope of the phenomenon of drug trafficking and its diversification thanks to globalization and technological progress are of concern to us all. Indeed, drug trafficking is now a true scourge and a real threat to the security and stability of a good number of countries. Illicit narcotics trafficking is today at the forefront of organized transnational crime, and abusive drug use leads many young people into physical and mental decay. Official reports and studies on the issue point to the fact that drug trafficking has grown significantly in recent years, thereby becoming a potential source of instability and destabilization.

In Mali we have made the fight against drugs and psychotropic products a first-line priority, given their negative impact on health and negative consequences in the socio-economic and security sectors. The Government of Mali has taken a series of steps aimed at combating this phenomenon by, in particular, establishing an anti-drug inter-ministerial coordination committee. The committee is charged with participating in the development of a national anti-drug policy, working to coordinate the efforts of various State services in the area of narcotics and psychotropic substances, coordinating educational efforts and offering advice about actions and measures planned by the Government.

The Government of Mali fully believes that no country today is immune from drug trafficking. Only effective and coordinated efforts, both within States and at the international level, will make it possible to stamp out this scourge.

The recent incident involving the Boeing plane in Tarkint has served to remind us of the urgency of better coordinating and harmonizing the efforts of our Governments to ensure an integrated and comprehensive approach to the problems and challenges facing the countries of the Sahelo-Saharan

region. It also served to underscore the need to further strengthen national and regional capacities. Upon the discovery, on 2 November, of the wreck of that plane in a deserted and uninhabited area of northern Mali, the Government of Mali quickly opened an investigation that included INTERPOL, the intelligence services of friendly countries and the relevant bodies of the United Nations system. The investigation is continuing, in particular with regard to tracing the origin of the aircraft and its route, cargo and equipment and the reason for the trip.

Press reports and information provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime with regard to the nature and size of the cargo will in no way influence the course of the investigation. We continue to believe that sensational statements and hasty conclusions will not be useful in exposing the truth. Having said that, I will say that for my country and its Government, whose position on this matter is not to be doubted, this is in no way about adopting a head-in-the-sand approach.

We have known for a long time that the Sahelo-Saharan strip, which Mali shares with many countries, has become an area where all sorts of trafficking takes place — trafficking in drugs, cigarettes, light weapons and human beings. In addition, the Government of Mali expresses its great concern at the extent of such trafficking, which has now joined terrorism and international organized crime to pose not just a serious threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries of the region, but also a major impediment to their development.

We are aware of the transnational nature of those threats, as well as of the crucial need for improved subregional cooperation to overcome them. That is why His Excellency Mr. Amadou Toumani Touré, President of the Republic of Mali, has worked tirelessly for more than two years to hold a regional conference in Bamako on the issues of peace, security and development in the Sahelo-Saharan region.

The conference will provide a useful opportunity for the countries of the region to reaffirm their joint determination to make the region they share a zone of peace and security and a centre of stability, growth and development. The preparatory meeting at the level of ministers for foreign affairs held in Bamako in November 2008 has already laid the groundwork. We hope that, very soon, the heads of State of the countries concerned will meet to consider and adopt the conference's conclusions.

We firmly believe that there is necessarily a link between all the scourges to which I have referred and that no single country can effectively address them all. The multiple challenges we face today require a collective and coherent response at the global level.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate here Mali's commitment to working with all countries and bodies involved in combating drug trafficking. We urge the international community and the United Nations to further support the initiatives and efforts made by our countries in our common fight to halt the drug trafficking phenomenon and create a better world.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Ragaglini (Italy): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's open debate on drug trafficking as a threat to international security. Following last July's debates on peace consolidation in West Africa (see S/PV.6157 and S/PV.6160), your initiative confirms the Security Council's attention to the growing threat posed by drug trafficking and organized crime to international peace and security. I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for their comprehensive and accurate reports.

Italy would like to endorse the statement delivered by the representative of Sweden in its capacity in the presidency of the European Union.

Never before has individual, national and international security been so clearly interconnected. Today transnational crime, particularly the drug trade, is relevant to the definition of a "world risk society". For the international community to tackle it, a new approach is needed, one that has two main characteristics: the ability to deal effectively with non-State actors, and improvements in international cooperation and information-sharing.

Security today is a multidisciplinary challenge. It requires global analysis, global commitment and a global response. While stopping drug traffickers is a decisive element, it should not be the driver of our policies. Development is a crucial step towards achieving security.

The 2009 Italian presidency of the Group of Eight (G-8) attached special significance to those new destabilizing factors and transnational threats. Last May, an international conference was held in Rome that was co-chaired by the Italian Interior and Foreign Affairs Ministers and attended by specialized international agencies, regional organizations and prominent experts. At the conference, participants defined the conceptual framework for the political declaration adopted in July by the G-8 leaders at L'Aquila.

The harmful leverage of drug trafficking and organized crime is multiplied in vulnerable regions, where they destabilize States from within and can create asymmetrical shocks at the international level. Your emphasis on the African situation, Mr. President, is thus particularly appropriate.

West Africa is a test case for the international community. The West African States' ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals depends, to a large extent, on strategic and effective coordination between international cooperation and national policies. The involvement of the United Nations Office for West Africa as a bridge between the Organization and regional efforts, along with the personal commitment of Ambassador Djinnit, represent an important step in that direction. I commend UNODC for its commitment and achievements in every aspect of our common action.

Some years ago, UNODC gave us an early warning about West Africa's risk of becoming a platform for drug trafficking and organized crime. Its reports on drug trafficking there represented the most detailed, in-depth analysis available at the international level.

UNODC encourages international cooperation through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West Africa Coast Initiative, which draw on the combined forces of the Department of Political Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and INTERPOL. Just last week, a donor conference in Vienna aimed at assisting ECOWAS attracted major support.

Italy has contributed €1.3 million to those initiatives and provided a coast guard unit and one aircraft for border control in Senegal in the framework of the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union, or FRONTEX, programme. Starting next January, UNODC will work in collaboration with two teams of Italian Guardia di Finanza experts to develop, execute and implement a capacity-building project for the law enforcement agencies of Guinea Bissau, Mali, Sierra Leone and Senegal to fight against drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. In response to the requests of national beneficiaries and the findings of country-based preliminary assessment missions, the Italian specialized trainers will develop and run tailored-made training programmes for each of those four countries.

Italy remains committed to supporting Afghanistan's efforts to reduce the illegal cultivation and production of narcotic substances. The outreach session of the G8 Ministerial Meeting, held in Trieste on 26-27 June, highlighted the need for joint initiatives in border management, the harmonization of judiciary systems, the strengthening of intelligence networks, the exchange of information, the eradication of illicit drug crops and alternative development.

Italy supports the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) and welcomes its cooperation with the Joint Planning Cell for the countries of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan and the Gulf Centre for Criminal Intelligence.

Italy contributed $500,000 to CARICC and €400,000 to UNODC regional programme on Afghanistan and neighbouring countries to enhance operational capacities in border management and to counter drug trafficking, and has contributed €1.5 million to the Afghan Counter-Narcotics Trust Fund.

Criminal entrepreneurs are exploiting regional vulnerabilities, taking advantage of their unique combination of risk and rewards under current conditions. Our response must change that arithmetic. Enabling information-sharing and police and judicial cooperation among all countries affected by this traffic would give a fundamental added value to our operational capacities.

In that regard, the United Nations conventions against crime and corruption are our strongest weapons. 2010 will mark the 10th anniversary of the Palermo Convention and its additional protocols. Today, more than ever, we need a firm commitment from the entire United Nations membership to that and other instruments. The General Assembly's omnibus resolution on the United Nations Crime Prevention and

Criminal Justice Programme, proposed by Italy and approved in November by the Third Committee with the co-sponsorship of 117 Member States, clearly affirms those goals.

That resolution requests the Secretary-General to convene a special high-level meeting of the General Assembly on transnational organized crime in the second quarter of 2010. The purpose of the meeting would be to foster universal adherence to the Palermo Convention and strengthen international cooperation. It should also create political momentum for next year's Conference of States Parties and its high-level segment. We call upon all Member States to be represented at the highest level possible at those events, so as to confirm our common political will and shared responsibility in tackling drug trafficking and related forms of organized crime.

Italy welcomes the presidential statement that was adopted by the Security Council today and will continue to be an active partner in international and regional efforts to tackle the convergent threats to international security of organized crime and drug trafficking.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Mr. Tete António.

Mr. António (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this debate and by commending the initiative of the Burkina Faso delegation, which has always defended the most vital interests of Africa during its terms on the Security Council. Through the action of the delegation of Burkina Faso, African Union (AU) decisions have been assured resonance in the Council.

We would also like to thank other African members of the Council, Libya and Uganda, for all the efforts they have made to achieve the same resonance of African Union decisions in the Council.

We reiterate our thanks to the Council, which has always dealt with African issues. A case in point would be today's meeting on the Côte d'Ivoire.

We also commend Mr. Antonio Maria Costa for his very instructive briefing, which painted a very clear picture of Africa. There is no need to go back over that information.

The production and abuse of drugs in many African countries, which are used as a transit point for their trafficking and stockpiling, is a great challenge for Africa. Youth is exposed to serious risks as the result of trafficking and drug abuse, as well as crimes associated with that problem such as money-laundering and human trafficking.

Excessive violence and crimes against humanity in conflict situations are, to a large extent, exacerbated by drug abuse. Given that situation, Africa is fighting incessantly to play its role in combating that scourge. In fact, the very first ministerial conference of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on the fight against drugs in Africa, held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, had as its primary objective the review and updating of the action plan that had been adopted during the thirty-second Summit of OAU Heads of State and Government in Yaounde, Cameroon, in July 1996.

The conference adopted a new 2002-2006 OAU action plan to combat drugs. Since that time, the African Union has followed up on its efforts and the third regular session of the Conference of Ministers of the African Union on fighting drugs and preventing crime was held in Addis Abbas, Ethiopia, in December 2007 on the topic of the renewed commitment in Africa to combating addiction and drug trafficking and to preventing crime.

The major result of that session was the revised action plan of the African Union on trafficking and drug abuse and crime prevention, as well as its follow-up mechanism, to be implemented in partnership by the interested parties at all levels. That plan is fully integrated as well in the strategic African Union plan for 2009-2012. Priority areas and recommendations listed and included in the plan clearly place the responsibility for its implementation on the AU Commission, member States, regional economic communities, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society.

The African plan also includes a multi-disciplinary approach, one that is coordinated and balanced so as to resolve the problems of drug abuse and trafficking, which must be dealt with in the context of African development beyond the narrow framework of simply curbing it.

In doing our utmost to find a solution to addiction, drug trafficking and related phenomenon,

the African Union is also emphasizing the principle of integration, putting the fight against drugs into all aspects of planning and the implementation of development, which includes the fight against poverty, the empowerment of women, alternative development strategies and HIV/AIDS programmes.

In the light of this fact, a new partnership was established with the competent organizations, with the participation of the Organization of American States, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom and the German agency German Technical Cooperation, which has launched cooperation by sharing experiences and best practices in the framework of alternative development programmes to eradicate coca and opium and the illegal cultivation of cannabis.

The African Union also emphasizes the importance of strengthening institutions, information on policymaking, research, the establishment of networks, national capacity-building, oversight and implementation of the law, regional legislative control measures and international cooperation. We are pleased to note, as a number of speakers have emphasized today, that African countries are undertaking a variety of legislative measures or capacity-building to implement legislation on the ground in order to honour Africa's commitment to combating this phenomenon. We call on the Security Council and the international community to support these efforts. We therefore welcome the presidential statement that was adopted today (S/PRST/2009/32).

A number of delegations referred to the problem of regional partnership. We think that such partnerships are a solution that we should build upon.

As with climate change, we assert that Africa is once again the victim of a situation — in this case, drug trafficking — for which it is not responsible. In fact, as many have noted, the drugs are produced elsewhere. They come through Africa and are for the most part consumed elsewhere.

There is one mechanism that we believe we may be able to continue to develop. The African Union, for example, in the framework of its cooperation with South America, has made the issue of fighting drugs one of its priorities. We also have the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone. It is clear that the Luanda Plan of Action sets out important measures that could be implemented to facilitate cooperation with South America, and in particular those countries of the continent where the drugs come from.

We also say to our European friends, with whom we have very close cooperation and ongoing dialogue, that drugs are consumed in their countries, so we all need to join in partnership to address this problem, which is of concern not only to Africa, but the entire world.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the Commissioner for Gender and Human Development of the Economic Community of West African States, Ms. Adrienne Yandé Diop.

Ms. Diop: First of all, I would like to congratulate the delegation of Burkina Faso on having drafted the presidential statement on drug trafficking as a threat to international security (S/PRST/2009/32) and for including this topic on the agenda of the Security Council. Burkina Faso has thus shown once again its commitment to regional issues and to resolving this very important problem.

On behalf of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), I have the honour to deliver the following statement on the situation of drug trafficking and organized crime in West Africa and the ECOWAS Commission's response to this scourge.

Drug trafficking has become a menace to West African peace, security and development. Our region is increasingly used as a transit route in the trafficking of cocaine towards growing European markets and demand. Fourteen per cent of Europe's cocaine transited through West Africa in 2008 — some 40 tons valued at billions of United States dollars. Since 2005, 90 per cent of the 1,400 couriers arrested carrying drugs on commercial flights to Europe have hailed from West African countries. According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) sources, cocaine couriers have been detected at embarkation from 11 of the 15 ECOWAS member States, namely, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. Since 2005, cocaine seizures from West Africa to Europe have more than doubled.

Why has West Africa become a transit route for trafficking? There are many reasons. First, there has been increased surveillance on traditional trafficking routes. Secondly, there is West Africa's proximity to

Latin America. Thirdly, West African crime groups are active and persistent, as well as flexible in their operations. Fourthly, weak States naturally have great difficulty in controlling their territory and the porous borders and permissive working environment if West Africa. Finally, there is, of course, the high rate of youth unemployment in our subregion.

The effects of drug trafficking on ECOWAS countries are devastating and dramatic. To name just a few, we have seen increased security problems, crime, violence and conflict. Drug trafficking has had a negative impact on governance, including corruption, the undermining of the rule of law and political instability. Drug trafficking has had a negative impact on the economy, with an unexplained high influx of money. We have witnessed the rising use of cocaine, which creates problems of public health, including HIV/AIDS, and social problems.

In recent years, this phenomenon has worsened. First, we have recently started to see local laboratories transforming cocaine into amphetamines on the spot. Secondly, it is a known fact that a country that traffics is a country that consumes, and a region that traffics is a region that consumes. Our region is becoming a consuming region, and our youth is the most affected. Thirdly, drug trafficking has a correlation to money-laundering, arms and human trafficking. These are three problems that ECOWAS is presently addressing.

Although policies and institutions to address the drug problem are in place in individual ECOWAS member States, they are not enough, given the nature of the drug problem. It must also be stressed that trafficking in drugs and other related crime transcends national boundaries. Drug trafficking, in particular, usually involves three or more countries — the producing country, the transit country and the consuming country. It has been said here over and over again that no country and no region can do it alone. It has therefore become a regional and international issue, and institutions have to come together to combat such a menace in a holistic manner.

The narcotics problem is a national security and foreign policy issue of significant proportions. The drug cartels are so large and powerful that they have undermined some Governments. We have learned just recently that, a few weeks ago, a Boeing 707 aircraft violated a West African country's airspace. The aircraft was suspected to be full of cocaine.

Money from the drug trade will continue to undermine efforts at good governance in the region, and the people who are addicted to the drugs will continue to constitute security and health concerns for their communities.

I may be painting a picture that looks grim and hopeless. Yes, the picture is grim, but we are not hopeless. We are glad that, based on the recommendation of a ministerial conference held in Praia, Cape Verde, the ECOWAS heads of State and Government rose to the occasion in 2008 by adopting the Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa and the Regional Response Action Plan, which identified cooperation in preventing and eradicating drug trafficking and abuse as a priority programme for the ECOWAS Commission.

Since the Praia conference, the ECOWAS Commission has taken a number of steps to fight organized crime and the drug trade at the regional level. With the support of UNODC, the ECOWAS Commission developed an operational plan and a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to translate the Regional Response Action Plan and Political Declaration into concrete, time-bound and costed activities.

The plan is articulated around five thematic areas: the mobilization of ECOWAS political leadership and the need for allocation of adequate national budgets by ECOWAS member States for preventing and combating illicit drug trafficking, related organized crime and drug abuse; enhancing the effectiveness of law and enforcement cooperation; developing and adopting legal frameworks for effective criminal justice administration; addressing drug abuse and associated health and security problems; and creating valid and reliable data to monitor the magnitude of the drug trafficking and abuse problems affecting the region on a sustainable basis.

The ECOWAS operational plan will also focus on programmes and projects aimed at harmonizing national legislation, undertaking research, conducting training programmes, providing treatment, rehabilitation and alternative livelihood activities to drug users, and exchanging information on known and potential traffickers and drug users, to mention a few.

The revision of legal frameworks seeks to address the following measures: the refusal of entry visas to or

expulsion from ECOWAS member States of suspected drug traffickers and manufacturers, the signing of extradition treaties covering drug cases on a bilateral basis among ECOWAS member States, and a study of the need for introducing in each ECOWAS member State laws pertaining to the confiscation of the properties and assets of those involved in the trafficking of drugs. The operational plan will also address the dearth of quality forensic services in the region through capacity-building, enhancing infrastructure, developing protocol and networking among experts and laboratories in the region.

The plan does not place the onus of addressing the drug problem on the region alone. Rather, it also seeks to incorporate a strong communication strategy aimed at drawing national and international attention to the threat and potential impact of drug trafficking in West Africa.

For the ECOWAS region, the operational plan is not merely focused on enhancing policing, interdiction and arrests, but also seeks to explore how we can exploit our diversity, values and social assets to address the drug problem. This is why the engagement of civil society organizations, the media and traditional institutions, as well as alternative development programmes addressing cannabis production, are priority areas in the operational plan.

However, the operational plan is just the beginning. There is much work ahead. That is why we look forward to the continued commitment and support of the United Nations and other partners in our common resolve to address a growing problem that transcends beyond boundaries. I am pleased to announce here that, just last week in Vienna, at a drug donor roundtable organized jointly by ECOWAS, UNODC and the Austrian Government, the European Commission pledged to support the implementation of the ECOWAS plan through its Regional Indicative Programme. I would like also like to express at this juncture our gratitude to all Member States and institutions that have supported the implementation of our operational plan.

Other regions that have faced similar challenges have recorded some degree of success. They have been tireless in their efforts, and if they could succeed, we in West Africa can also succeed. I would like to conclude my address by once again reiterating on behalf of the ECOWAS Commission my profound gratitude for this opportunity and for the interest expressed in the development of the West African region.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Amieyeofori (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation congratulates you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month and on initiating this important discussion on drug trafficking as a threat to international security, thereby capping two years of productive presence on the Security Council. We thank the Secretary-General for his invaluable views and continuing efforts to tackle the problem. We also thank Mr. Antonio Maria Costa for his comprehensive statement and tenacity in the fight against drug trafficking.

Drug trafficking remains a major challenge to global peace and security. No country is totally immune from its devastating effects and none can fight and win the anti-narcotics war alone, regardless of the size of the resources at its disposal. In Africa, illicit drug trafficking, cultivation, processing and abuse are persistently on the rise and creating barriers to the continent's development efforts. International drug cartels outside the region are exploiting the underresourced border enforcement capacities of some countries and turning them into transit routes for prohibited drugs.

West Africa is most affected by the reprehensible activities of these drug cartels. The subregion is fast becoming a major warehouse and transit hub for cocaine and other illicit drugs. The actions of these criminal syndicates constitute a major threat not only to the subregion's fledgling democratic structures, but also to governance in general. Indeed, they constitute serious impediments to subregional efforts to promote human prosperity, wealth creation, economic development, the rule of law and peacebuilding. Drug trafficking has led directly to increased violent crimes, small arms proliferation, human trafficking, corruption, money-laundering and political instability.

Against this background, the States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have demonstrated appreciable political will and commitment to fighting the scourge. In December 2008, the ECOWAS Action Plan on illicit drugs was adopted in Abuja by the heads of State and Government of ECOWAS as a major legal framework to complement existing mechanisms. The West Africa

Coast Initiative to support the implementation of the Action Plan has also been launched in Vienna and in New York. The Initiative recognizes the importance of partnerships for leveraging resources and for building national and regional capacities in the areas of law enforcement, forensics, intelligence, border management, the fight against money-laundering and the strengthening of criminal justice systems. The Initiative requires international support and gradual expansion beyond the pilot countries.

At the national level, the Nigerian National Drug Enforcement Agency has adopted a dual approach — drug supply control and drug demand control — to prevent the country from being used as a source, transit and destination for narcotics. The Agency is strengthening its institutional capacity, prosecutorial capability and surveillance activities. Nigeria remains firmly committed to achieving the ultimate goal of ridding the country and the West African subregion of the menace of drug trafficking. Nigeria is also committed to strengthening ties with its development partners and the international community, especially with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, INTERPOL and the United Nations Office for West Africa.

Nigeria believes that the problem of drug trafficking requires national, subregional and regional approaches. Thus, we will continue to work closely with the African Union, ECOWAS and the Intergovernmental Action Group Against Money Laundering in West Africa to tackle this problem. At the bilateral level, Nigeria is strengthening its ties with several countries, including the United Kingdom, South Africa and China, on drug control.

In spite of these efforts, the international community must continue to pay close attention to developments in the West African region before the situation there escalates into an emergency. In the sprit of shared and common responsibility, Nigeria urges the international community to provide necessary assistance to States of the subregion to build their capacities in order to respond more effectively to these challenges.

Combating drug trafficking and related organized crime must be situated in the wider context of poverty eradication and human development, in line with the commitments undertaken in the Millennium Development Goals. Attention should also be paid to conflict prevention in the subregion and to the role played by the African diaspora in the chain. Efforts should not be limited to cocaine and cannabis imported mainly from outside the continent, but should extend to drugs produced locally. An urgent area of focus and capacity support should be the development of mechanisms for gathering and sharing information on organized criminal groups in the subregion.

Let me assure you, Mr. President, of Nigeria's overwhelming support for the presidential statement adopted by the Council today (S/PRST/2009/32). We look forward to working closely with other delegations to implement existing frameworks.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Cape Verde.

Mrs. Lima da Veiga (Cape Verde): At the outset, I wish to congratulate Burkina Faso, President of the Security Council for the month of December, on having selected the issue of drug trafficking as a threat to international security as the topic of today's debate.

This debate has a particular meaning for the West African region, which is becoming a hub for the trafficking of drugs, in particular cocaine. The risks and emerging challenges associated with this problem are huge for that region, which is already struggling with social, economic and political vulnerabilities. Among those risks and challenges are new illicit businesses in the region whose impact extends to other regions of the continent and beyond, increasing drug abuse and related health and security problems, human trafficking, the destruction of human capital and the financing of illegal armed activities and terrorism.

Because of its transboundary nature and the serious threats it poses to regional stability and international security, drug trafficking has attracted the growing attention of the international community. It is on the agendas of the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union and other international organizations. It is also the drive behind the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crimes in West Africa and the Regional Response Action Plan to address the growing problem of illicit drug trafficking.

In adopting the Action Plan, we members of ECOWAS have committed ourselves to mobilizing our political leadership and ensuring the necessary

resources to prevent and combat illicit drug trafficking, related organized crime and drug abuse in a strategic and durable way. In several of our States, the Regional Response Action Plan has been translated into national plans, although the rhythm of implementation and results may differ from State to State due to endogenous circumstances and constraints.

Referring to the particular case of Cape Verde, our geographical situation at the crossroads of three continents — Africa, Europe and the Americas — is a source of both opportunity and risk. Building upon the opportunities and reducing the risk factors are therefore at the core of our transformational development policies.

To reduce the risk factors and effectively combat new threats, we have adopted a comprehensive security policy and strategy that clearly represent a break with the past in terms of concept, implementation tools and articulation with national stakeholders and international partners. At the legislative level, new laws to counter narcotics, money-laundering and corruption have been adopted. Cooperation has been developed with strategic partners to enhance institutional capacity, law enforcement, surveillance of our waters, control of illicit maritime activities and intelligence-sharing.

Law enforcement and drug control entities and institutions mandated to prevent and deal with financial crimes linked to money-laundering and the financing of terrorism have been put in place. Controls in ports and airports have been tightened. Furthermore, Cape Verde has ratified the pertinent international conventions and adapted its national legislation to the international legal framework. Drug supply and demand have been reduced. Preventive education, treatment, rehabilitation and reinsertion activities have been implemented in close cooperation with civil society organizations.

Despite the positive results achieved, the struggle is not yet over. Many challenges remain. Strengthening justice administration and continuing to provide law enforcement entities with the necessary legal frameworks is essential to reducing the potential infiltration of Cape Verde's society and economy by corrupt practices. Therefore, Cape Verde is focusing attention on the need to intensify actions to prevent drug abuse and urban violence, in particular among young people; to strengthen treatment options for drug-abusers and their social reintegration; to reduce the possibility of the use of the national territory for the illicit drug trade; and to enhance national, regional and international cooperation.

We have been always aware that our fight cannot be effective and durable while our region continues to be used as a safe haven by drug traffickers and organized criminal groups due to weak legislation and enforcement institutions. Without constant and firm action by our neighbouring countries, we would be unable to make further progress. That knowledge moved us to actively participate in the efforts of ECOWAS to develop a regional legal framework to tackle drug trafficking and harmonize the domestic laws of member States against drug trafficking.

That same reasoning moved us to host in October 2008 in our capital, Praia, the ECOWAS High-level Conference on Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat in West Africa, which led to the adoption of the Political Declaration and the Regional Response Action Plan. Given our track record on cooperation and our modest success at curbing drug trafficking from Latin America, we stand ready to continue to share information and best practices and to engage with other ECOWAS member States. That will be important to improve drug control and to strengthen prevention, treatment and rehabilitation efforts, while curbing the impact of the drug trade on national economies and political stability.

While Cape Verde applauds the international community for its growing concern and attention to the problem, it is of the view that international responses should better reflect the seriousness of the situation. They should be comprehensive, strategic and more coordinated. In this context, Cape Verde salutes the recent roundtable of ECOWAS partners organized in Vienna with the support of the Austrian Government and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. We salute the various commitments made at the roundtable and urge their rapid translation into concrete actions to accelerate the implementation of the Regional Response Action Plan. Indeed, what has been achieved so far is very positive, but much remains to be done.

In line with its responsibility to maintain international peace and security, the Security Council should continue to monitor the situation and take measures to assist other United Nations bodies to deliver a more coordinated response. The extraordinary

work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime should be duly supported.

We also urge the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole to strengthen their actions against drug producing and purchasing markets and transit countries, and to increase awareness about the harmful potential of the drug trade. Efforts to effectively hold accountable all of those involved in this illegal activity should also be scaled up, in compliance with obligations set out in the various legal instruments on combating international crimes. Member States should unequivocally join these efforts. Regional and subregional organizations, civil society and other stakeholders should be encouraged to build resilience to drug trafficking and to prevent the emergence of drug conflicts.

The recent reaffirmation in Vienna of the fundamentals of the ECOWAS Political Declaration and Regional Response Action Plan and, more important, the programmes and plans already in motion are a clear signal of the political will and commitment of the countries of our subregion to assume their share of responsibility in the process.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Luxembourg.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I congratulate the Burkina Faso presidency of the Security Council on having organized this public debate on drug trafficking as a threat to international security. Luxembourg fully supports the statement made by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

My country agrees with the analysis that organized crime linked to drug trafficking represents a serious threat to international peace and security and a significant impediment to sustainable development. We must urgently react to the serious problems posed by the ever-strengthening links between drug trafficking, corruption and other types of organized crime, such as human trafficking, illicit arms trafficking, cybercrime and money-laundering, including that used to finance terrorism. The international community must step up its efforts to assist countries, subregions and regions affected by the scourge of drug trafficking, and the activities of the United Nations should be at the centre of these joint efforts.

The problem of narcotics trafficking should, in future, be part of a comprehensive approach to conflicts and an integral part of peacekeeping operations, peacebuilding strategies and, in more general terms, our development policy. In this regard, we welcome resolutions 1829 (2008) and 1876 (2009), on Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, respectively.

In my capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council, I should like to emphasize, in this context, the potential for cooperation among the Council, especially through its Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission in the fight against drug trafficking and its impact on stability, governance and socio-economic development in countries emerging from conflict.

Faced with the growth in drug production and trafficking, the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, adopted at the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, have reiterated once again the importance of simultaneously reducing supply and demand, as well as the need to strengthen and step up joint efforts at the national, regional and international levels to deal with these global problems in a more comprehensive way pursuant to the principle of common and shared responsibility.

If international action is to have its full effect, we need the support of all the States Members of our Organization. And those efforts begin with the national implementation of existing international instruments. My country has ratified all the international conventions relating to the fight against drugs and transnational crime, and, specifically, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. In implementing that Convention, Luxembourg is among the few countries to have followed up on article 5 and established a fund to combat narcotics trafficking by reinvesting confiscated drug money in projects aimed at fighting drug trafficking. For example, at the request of the Minister of Justice of Mali, between 2010 and 2012 Luxembourg will co-finance through this fund a project aimed at fighting the rise in organized crime, and in drug trafficking in particular, and its destabilizing effects in Mali and the subregion.

In the context of our cooperation and development policy, my country, in addition to its regular contributions to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, is also carrying out a number of bilateral projects in the area of counter-narcotics trafficking, including projects that integrate aspects of peacebuilding. Luxembourg is sincerely convinced that we must address the dimensions of peace, security, development and human rights in an integrated way, giving the same attention to each.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Barbarlić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset, I should like to thank you, Sir, for having organized the debate on this important topic, with particular attention to its repercussions in Africa. Bosnia and Herzegovina aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

The interrelationship between drugs, organized crime, human trafficking and corruption represents a universal challenge that endangers the economies, security and political stability of all countries of the world. These threats, which do not respect borders, require each country and the international community to make additional efforts to enhance multilateral partnerships and cooperation to properly address this modern scourge.

Enhanced knowledge of trends is a prerequisite for effective policymaking and operational responses. In this context, I would like to underline the importance of the ratification and implementation of international legal treaties. Of particular importance is the need to provide national drug control information that will enable United Nations treaty-based and governing bodies to monitor patterns in drug abuse, to make realistic impact assessments and to develop global and regional policies to fight illicit drugs and crime.

On the other hand, technical assistance to Member States — especially to developing countries with fragile political and economic situations — is crucial to strengthening national capacities to create efficient drug control frameworks, to preventing and counteracting illicit drug abuse, and to providing access to drug dependence treatments and creating an environment favourable to reintegration and alternative development.

My delegation would like to join those who have acknowledged the seriousness of this problem and to point out that, given its nature, it is clear that no single country acting alone can address this problem successfully. While building the proper judicial and police systems in individual countries is of paramount importance, cooperation at the subregional and regional level is equally important.

In that sense, we fully support the work of the Economic Community of West African States in promoting and fostering regional cooperation in West Africa aimed at countering drug proliferation. Although we are discussing the situation in Africa, similar problems are occurring in other regions as well.

I should also like to use this opportunity to state that my country has undertaken important legislative, judicial and structural reforms aimed at strengthening our national drug control system and fighting illicit trafficking and related crimes. The Parliamentary Assembly of my country has also adopted a national strategy on the supervision of narcotic drugs and the prevention and suppression of the abuse of narcotic drugs, and a plan of action for its implementation. I should also like to stress that we have established close cooperation with the customs and border-control services of neighbouring countries and initiated the conclusion of bilateral agreements on police and judicial cooperation based on the common understanding that tackling drug trafficking crimes requires a regional approach.

We believe that it is crucial to cooperate, exchange information and experiences, and promote good practices in confronting this issue. In that regard, Bosnia and Herzegovina fully supports the joint efforts undertaken by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other relevant United Nations organs and agencies in tackling the numerous security risks caused by drug trafficking in many countries and regions, particularly in Africa. Lessons learned in one place can often be of great use and help in another. In that context, the knowledge and expertise of UNODC are of exceptional value, and Member States should benefit from them.

In conclusion, I would once again like to reiterate that this discussion in the Security Council is timely and very important, and we hope that the results of today's deliberations will energize the concrete

activities necessary to combat illegal drug trafficking and related crimes in Africa. Positive results in this struggle on the African continent will in turn contribute to global action to build security and justice in the region.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Ghana.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): Ghana is pleased to see Burkina Faso presiding over the Security Council this month and was particularly honoured to see Mr. Alain Yoda, Minister for Foreign Affairs, presiding earlier over today's open debate. My delegation also wishes to express its appreciation to the delegation of Burkina Faso for having organized this debate, as well as for having prepared the concept paper on the important issue as illicit drug trafficking, which poses a real and present threat to the peace, security and stability of many regions of the world, including Africa. My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his presence and his statement, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for his briefing. We also align ourselves with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

West Africa has become not only a transit point but also a final destination for the illicit drug trade, which usually follows a circuitous route, originating in South America, to Europe and elsewhere, in a vicious cycle of reduction, supply, transport, transit and consumption. In some cases, that illicit trade has triggered or fueled conflicts, corruption and other organized crimes, such as the trafficking of persons, particularly women and children, who are often deceived, abducted or otherwise forcibly recruited as drug couriers against their will.

In keeping with Ghana's commitment to the fight against illicit trafficking in drugs, the Government of Ghana has taken measures at the national level to combat drug trafficking, including strengthening land border controls and sea patrols. The Narcotics Control Board of Ghana is being streamlined to enhance its data collection capability, and the possibility is being explored to enable the Board to exercise the power to prosecute drug-related crimes. The judicial and law enforcement authorities of Ghana have accorded cases involving drug trafficking renewed priority with a view to ensuring the speedy disposal of such cases and to imposing stricter bail conditions for suspects, including safeguards to preserve evidence obtained to facilitate prosecutions, while at the same time ensuring that standards of fair trial and due process are not undermined. Training programmes have been undertaken to enhance the ability of judicial and law enforcement agencies to handle drug cases in a more efficient manner.

Recognizing that our national efforts must be complemented by bilateral, regional and international cooperation, given that the problem of drug trafficking is a global challenge, Ghana has sought and received bilateral technical assistance to improve airport screening procedures for passengers and luggage. Following parliamentary ratification by Ghana of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, our country is considering becoming a party to the principal Convention itself. In March this year, Ghana hosted an international meeting to address the protection and assistance needs of victims of drug trafficking.

At the subregional level, Ghana subscribes to the Political Declaration on the Prevention Of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crimes in West Africa of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and urges the international community to provide the required resources for a more effective implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Response Action Plan aimed at strengthening national capacities and cross-border cooperation to tackle drug trafficking and organized crime.

To that end, Ghana welcomes the West Africa Coast Initiative, which is a United Nations inter-agency initiative involving UNODC, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Office for West Africa and INTERPOL. Effective coordination and coherence among those agencies, and also among the agencies and ECOWAS and the African Union (AU), would be instrumental in achieving the successful implementation of that Initiative. It is no coincidence that the ECOWAS Action Plan highlights not only illicit drug trafficking, but also other organized crimes. Efforts to combat illicit drug trafficking must be part of the overall effort to deter, detect and punish organized crime, as the various forms of organized crimes tend to be mutually reinforcing and interlinked.

National, regional and international efforts to enhance national capacities to combat organized crime might be fruitless if organized crime networks, which normally operate in the shadowy underground world in order to elude detection, succeed in compromising the integrity of law enforcement agencies through corruption, which would provide those networks with the opportunity to conduct and carry out illicit drug and related activities with impunity. In fact, in many cases, what is required is not capacity-building at the legislative, institutional or technical levels, but rather the ability and political will of law enforcement authorities and political leaders to say no to crime and corruption.

That is why Ghana is a party to the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Corruption, and has introduced various pieces of legislation to make corruption unattractive to public officials and private individuals alike. The Attorney General of Ghana has recently circulated an analytical publication comparing Ghana's anti-corruption laws to the United Nations and AU treaties on corruption as a tool to create public awareness of Ghana's commitment to combating corruption at the national, regional and international levels. Combating corruption should be central to any strategy to fight drug trafficking and other organized crime.

As is well known, the experience of some countries emerging from conflict has taught us that illicit drug trafficking and other organized crimes tend to thrive in an atmosphere of conflict, the absence of the rule of law and the lack of good governance and democratic accountability, in which the legitimate State institutions, and indeed society as a whole, have been rendered weak and fragile. For that reason, some organized criminals have at times sought to undermine the stability of States and frustrated post-conflict recovery efforts.

During the democracy roundtable held by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance in Mexico City last week, participants heard examples of illicit funds that have been used to influence electoral processes and to corrupt and seize the State apparatus. It also called for broader international cooperation against organized crime, with a focus on the collective defence and protection of democratic institutions and processes so as to strengthen their resilience to the pressure of illicit funding and organized crime.

In its presidential statement of July this year (S/PRST/2009/20), the Security Council recognized the link between illicit drug trafficking and other organized crime and conflict when it expressed concern about cross-border issues in West Africa, such as the illegal drug trade, terrorist activity in the Sahel, maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea, weapons proliferation, in particular of small arms, and the resurgence of undemocratic seizures of power, and called for a comprehensive strategy of conflict resolution and crisis prevention while addressing such issues.

That means that, in addition to the ECOWAS Regional Response Action Plan to combat illicit drugs, the international community must support ECOWAS in implementing its Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, which came into force recently. Such a comprehensive strategy should include support for the ongoing efforts of ECOWAS, in collaboration with the AU, the United Nations and the international community in general, to promote respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law and constitutional order in West Africa, including support for the application of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

It is equally important for the Council and the General Assembly to continue or to enhance their political, financial and strategic support for the Peacebuilding Commission to expedite its work, in partnership with ECOWAS and the AU Peace and Security Council, in addressing the root causes of the conflicts in Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Burundi and the Central African Republic with a view to consolidating post-conflict recovery in those countries.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that the previous and present calls for partnership, shared responsibility and international cooperation would suggest that the international community is aware of what is required to confront the challenge of illicit drug trafficking and other organized crime. Such calls also indicate that what might be missing is urgent action to address the problems already identified in the various United Nations and other studies and reports, as well as in resolutions of this Council, including the presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/32) adopted today.

I therefore wish to close by echoing the plea made in July by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime that illicit drug trafficking must be stopped (see S/PV.6157), and to call for urgent action.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Argüello (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, our delegation, too, wishes to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your work in the presidency during the month of December and to thank you above all for convening this open debate. We reiterate the importance of the Security Council's holding public meetings that enable all the Members of the Organization to express their views and to interact with Council members. Also allow me to thank through you Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for his very comprehensive briefing of the Council in this morning's meeting.

The issue of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotics and related crimes is one of the most disturbing problems on the international agenda today. The reports prepared by UNODC, the International Narcotics Control Board and other sources cite countries in every part of the world — consumer countries, countries that produce the various drugs and countries of transit and sale. The Argentine Republic upholds the principle of shared responsibility between producer, consumer and transit countries and stresses the need for a focus balanced between combating drug trafficking and related crimes and taking measures to prevent consumption and ensure help for addicts.

In the fight against drugs and drug trafficking, a comprehensive approach is needed, through coordinating policies for monitoring trafficking, preventing addiction and helping addicts. At the same time, it is essential that States' responses be strengthened through an ongoing dialogue with civil society, and that the fight against drug trafficking and related crimes be conducted with full respect for human rights and with a nuanced focus that seeks the social rehabilitation of addicts.

We are convinced that it is important to have a regional focus that reinforces cooperation at the international level. In our hemisphere, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission monitors the implementation of binding legal instruments and the Anti-Drug Strategy that was approved in Buenos Aires in 1996. We believe that monitoring and assessment should be conducted through multilateral mechanisms that coordinate international cooperation and are based on objective, reliable information. We particularly wish to highlight the importance of the regional Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism as an objective instrument for measuring member States' progress in controlling the illicit drug problem, as well as for identifying vulnerabilities and areas that need improvement and for strengthening solidarity and cooperation in the hemisphere.

Argentina takes an active part in international initiatives on this subject, and we contribute to the work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, of which we are a member. We also support the central role of the International Narcotics Control Board and UNODC, as well as other multilateral initiatives and agreements. Among those I should single out the Political Declaration adopted in March during the high-level segment of the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (see E/2009/28-E/CN.7/2009/12), which proposes several measures to intensify international cooperation, a key factor in this area.

I shall conclude by stressing that the transnational nature of illicit drug trafficking calls for a coordinated response on the part of the international community and of every region. To that end, the action of existing mechanisms with specific competencies must be strengthened in order to fully implement international and regional legal instruments. That will strengthen judicial cooperation and cooperation among security forces and will ensure the resources essential for combating this phenomenon through international cooperation, even in the most vulnerable regions.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): First, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on Burkina Faso's accession to the presidency of the Security Council for December, and to thank you for taking the wise initiative of organizing this open debate on the subject of drug trafficking as a threat to international security, the importance of which is by now beyond doubt.

I would be remiss if I did not pay tribute to the Burkina Faso delegation for the excellent way it has

represented Africa on the Council for the last two years.

At a time when the international community is celebrating the centenary of international drug control, whose foundations were laid by the International Opium Commission, it is disturbing to note that drug trafficking continues to be a serious threat to international and regional peace and security, to States' political and economic stability and to public health.

In a world characterized by an enormous expansion of trade and advanced use of modern means of communication, the production and illicit trafficking of drugs are among the major activities of international organized crime, with transactions involving colossal sums of money. Traffickers have access to ever more sophisticated ways of laundering income from drugs and smuggling, which is why it is essential to grapple with this problem as a whole, keeping in view the interconnections and known links among the various evils — of traffic in drugs, people and organs, of money-laundering and corruption, cybercrime and, especially, the devastating phenomenon of international terrorism, for which drugs constitute the main source of financing, along with ransoms coming from the crime of hostage-taking.

The intersection of all those crimes and the confluence of other factors such as the multifaceted crisis that has rocked the world's economy are imperiling international security and the rule of law, especially in Africa, which has to deal with multiple challenges. In that regard it is alarming to see that West Africa is becoming a crossroads for global drug trafficking, exacerbating political and security instability in a number of countries of the region to the point of causing the overthrow of constitutionally elected Governments, with the potential risk of spreading to the regional level.

Algeria supports the efforts of countries in the subregion of West Africa carried out in the framework of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and we were pleased with the adoption by ECOWAS at Praia in October of a Political Declaration and Regional Action Plan that will enable the establishment of mechanisms and policies capable of dealing with this scourge.

My delegation also believes that it is vitally important to strengthen the international treaty framework by calling on all States to ratify the collection of conventions having to do with combating drugs, organized transnational crime and corruption and all relevant conventions regarding terrorism. Beyond that, we must stick to the objectives set out during the twentieth special session of the General Assembly (see resolution S-20/4), as well as the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted during the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (see E/2009/28 and E/CN.7/2009/12), aimed at achieving an integrated and balanced strategy for fighting the global drug problem. It is clear from those documents that it is vital to work to reduce both the supply of and the demand for drugs and to promote international cooperation through an integrated approach.

With respect to the African continent in particular, the international community must work more closely with States and regional and subregional organizations to strengthen institutional capacities to combat drug trafficking and all other forms of organized crime. It is also essential to become actively involved in economic efforts and the promotion of alternative development policies in that region in order to strengthen and broaden economic opportunities and prospects, and thereby to reduce the possibilities and temptations to resort to criminal activity.

For its part, at its twelfth Summit in February 2009, the African Union adopted a decision on the growing threat of drug trafficking, in particular in West Africa, which has become a source of concern with respect to the security and good governance of the region and the entire continent. In that regard, the African Union called on the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to step up and broaden its cooperation with African regional communities in order to strengthen its action against the scourge on the continent. My delegation wishes here to pay a strong tribute to UNODC, which can play a vital role in assisting States in their efforts to combat drugs and organized crime, in spite of being financed essentially by voluntary contributions. We should also like to welcome the in-depth analysis developed by Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of UNODC, in his briefing to the Council this morning.

In conclusion, the Council, which is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, must play a greater role in combating drug trafficking and organized crime in conflict and post-conflict environments. My delegation welcomes the

presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/32), which the Council adopted this morning on Burkina Faso's initiative.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Gutiérrez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your outstanding work as President of the Security Council for this month.

The delegation of Peru associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. My delegation also wishes briefly to touch on certain issues pertinent to today's debate.

The illicit traffic in drugs is a severe problem for many States and is cause for international concern. The world demand for cocaine alone amounts to almost 1,000 tons a year, with an estimated value of some $70 billion. Regardless of the status of the affected States, be they producer, consumer or transit States, it is clear that it is a global problem, the responsibility for which is shared by all, as was recently reaffirmed in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem (see E/2009/28), adopted recently at the high-level segment of the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

Although the world drug problem is addressed in the appropriate forums of the United Nations system — the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, including the Commission on Narcotic Drugs — we understand that when the issue is compounded by other problems it generates instability and can threaten the security of certain States and their neighbours. That is so because drug trafficking is associated with violence and organized crime, and in certain countries is linked with terrorist activities. Drug trafficking is also associated with other criminal activities, such as money-laundering, arms trafficking and corruption, causing major material damage and the loss of human life.

This dangerous interrelationship is especially clear in Africa. It is disturbing that, due to demand generated mostly in Europe, some parts of Africa, West Africa in particular, have become transit zones for cocaine trafficking. West Africa has also emerged as a transit point for heroin and the precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants. According to statistics of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the volume of cocaine that is said to reach Europe is some 250 tons a year, with a market value of approximately $11 billion. In that regard, West Africa supplies Europe with some 30 per cent of its total consumption of cocaine. However, over the past two years, as a result of changes in modes of drug consumption in Europe, those levels fell by 14 per cent in 2008.

In spite of the reduced quantities being trafficked, such activity continues to have a negative impact on West Africa, where concern is rising over the indices of corruption and the impunity enjoyed by drug traffickers, who also contaminate weak national economies with their abundant funds. This is particularly serious when we consider that some countries facing such threats, especially in West Africa, are emerging from conflict situations or severe internal political tensions and remain economically, socially and politically fragile.

Poverty and the lack of basic services increase social discontent and remain a challenge to stability in the region. In this context, organized crime, especially illicit drug trafficking and corruption, finds fertile ground for its activities, exacerbating existing problems and creating additional obstacles to State-building, the well-being of their populations and the security of the subregion.

The Peacebuilding Commission is playing an important role in addressing this set of problems, which is among the many fundamental reasons why Peru supported its establishment and anticipates providing it with support in the immediate future. One concrete example of the Peacebuilding Commission's work on this issue was the inclusion in 2007 of Guinea-Bissau on its agenda, with Peru's support at a time when my country was a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

None of the affected countries nor the region as a whole can address the drug problem facing Africa by themselves, since it is not exclusively an African problem. It is a problem that must be tackled by the international community as a whole through bilateral, regional and multilateral strategies. It is high time that the developed countries, and in particular the consumer countries, give cooperation against drug trafficking pride of place on their agendas, especially as the

Political Declaration adopted at the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs highlights the need to intensify and strengthen joint efforts, inter alia, by increasing and coordinating technical and financial assistance.

For Africa, in spite of the resolve of its countries and their strenuous efforts — especially through the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, with the precious support of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime — even more technical and material assistance is needed to reinforce border controls along their coasts and in their airspace, as are increased training and better equipment for police forces investigating the activities of organized crime and drug trafficking. International cooperation is also needed to create the appropriate legal framework for an active criminal justice system, to establish the necessary law enforcement measures, and to gather reliable data to assess the magnitude of the problems of drug trafficking and abuse affecting the region.

We must therefore understand where the cooperation, especially in the form of financial assistance, is being directed so that we can understand how States are responding to the drug problem at the international level. If necessary, we must redirect that cooperation to the countries in greatest need. In that regard, Peru believes that we need a global report that compiles statistics and relevant information on the resources that international cooperation is devoting to the fight against illicit drug trafficking and that identifies key programmes of enhanced cooperation with the countries most affected by illicit drug production and trafficking. We believe that a first step in that direction is that the draft resolution on international cooperation against the world drug problem, which will soon be submitted to the General Assembly for adoption, recognizes the need for this information and calls on Member States to support the dialogue on this theme, through the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

Supporting African countries suffering the consequences of drug trafficking on their territories is a necessity that the international community cannot ignore, especially when this situation, together with specific national situations, generates political instability that can even affect regional security. Hence, the support we can provide should be part of an integrated development and security strategy that will contribute to building lasting peace in Africa.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bailly (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to take the floor during this open debate on the item "Peace and security in Africa: drug trafficking as a threat to international security", which is a matter of great interest to us.

At the outset, Mr. President, I join other delegations in conveying to you my warm congratulations on this noble initiative, which has given us an opportunity to pool our thoughts on one of the ills that is undermining the harmonious development of Africa. My appreciation also goes to the United Nations, and in particular the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, for all the assistance provided to my country and especially for the unceasing and tireless efforts to the benefit of developing countries as they combat the scourge of drugs.

Trafficking in drugs, which now more than ever is a part of globalization, is nothing new. We no longer hesitate to talk about it as a transnational organized crime with its own characteristics in terms of scope, organization and financing. The growth of this scourge has a dangerous effect on the equilibrium of our States, and because of their transnational nature, these crimes pose a serious threat to national, subregional and international peace and security.

In the wake of decades of fratricidal wars whose disastrous consequences continue to hamper its development, the West African region has become a major transit area for drug trafficking, in particular cocaine being shipped from Latin America to Europe. This is a major scourge with an impact on the equilibrium of all our societies. Besides the rise in crime that it causes, this trafficking harms our public health systems and spreads HIV/AIDS.

Drug money corrupts our financial systems and poses a threat to the survival of our States. It generates a specific type of crime and creates networks of criminals with their associated terrorism, gang wars and payback — even armed movements. The fact is that drug trafficking finances and is accompanied by other crimes such as arms trafficking, terrorism and money-laundering.

Côte d'Ivoire has not been idle in the fight against drug abuse and drug trafficking. Since the 2002 Yamoussoukro Ministerial Conference on Drug Control in Africa, we have put in place a comprehensive national strategy encompassing prevention, education, health care and treatment, assistance and reintegration, along with a crackdown on trafficking, illicit production and consumption. The strategy, which has the support of the President and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, includes a number of special measures, such as coordination and supervision of the national fight against drugs by an inter-ministerial anti-drug committee, and mobilization and action by the police directorate on drugs, targeting areas such as smoking rooms and other places where traffickers congregate and systematically destroying inventories and the substances seized. We have ratified and are implementing a number of relevant instruments, including the 2000 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols. We are working to harmonize our national legislation with regional and international instruments, and we have put in place national and subregional training programmes organized by the Centre régional de formation à la lutte contre la drogue de Grand Bassam in close cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Côte d'Ivoire is mindful of the need for a comprehensive regional and international approach to put an end to this scourge, and our action in this sphere must be taken within a regional and international framework. Here, my country, which has already undertaken bilateral agreements and partnerships with friendly States on securing our borders and other sensitive sites such as ports and airports, continues to enhance its cooperation with INTERPOL. My country is also working with its focal points to implement the Regional Action Plan against illicit drug trafficking and organized crime in West Africa, adopted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) at Praia, Cape Verde, in 2008.

In spite of these efforts, our States face many challenges if they are to provide a comprehensive, coordinated and effective national and international response. Among other things, we need to strengthen and harmonize the regional and international legal framework, exchange information, provide education and increase legal assistance in order to make investigations and legal proceedings more effective both in the ECOWAS area and throughout Africa. Technical and financial assistance is a vital necessity for capacity-building. We must also secure our land, air and maritime borders, providing effective systems for control and verification.

In his report on international cooperation against the world drug problem (A/64/120), the Secretary-General gives an overview of the world drug situation and the status of international drug control activities. Among other things, the alarming increase of cocaine trafficking through West Africa and heroin trafficking through East Africa is a matter of urgency. That is why we must all strengthen international cooperation in facing up to this global drug problem.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin by saying how pleased we are to see an African country, Burkina Faso, presiding over the work of the Security Council. My country endorses the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement on the item on today's agenda.

Venezuela appreciates and endorses all the efforts that Burkina Faso can make during its presidency of the Security Council to contribute to the resolution of the armed conflicts Africa faces and to bolster the initiatives of the African Union towards building peace and reconciliation among the countries of the continent. We believe that Burkina Faso will contribute to preventing some members of the Security Council from adopting decisions that are remote from international law and that would prevent dialogue and reconciliation in Africa.

We have been invited to an open Security Council debate on drug trafficking in Africa as a threat to international security. Three fundamental points need to be highlighted. First, under the United Nations Charter drug trafficking is not within the purview of the Security Council. Secondly, this is an issue that, given its scope, must be addressed in an inclusive manner, not through a self-interested and a priori reductionist approach imposed by one, two, three, four or five countries among the international community. Thirdly, the Security Council has demonstrated that it does not wish to or cannot carry out its own functions. For this reason, it should not claim new functions that are outside its competence. An illustration of the

Council's ineptitude in dealing with issues relevant to the international community is its complete disregard for the resolutions adopted with regard to Palestine, which are binding on Israel.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela shares the common interest in and will to fight this scourge in the framework of international cooperation and in fullest respect for the sovereignty of countries and for human rights, in particular the principles of due process, proportionality and the presumption of innocence, among others. Venezuela believes that the world drug problem should continue to be addressed in the framework of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary body, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in accordance with the current practice and existing commitments on this subject.

In this regard, we would recall that as recently as in March of this year, at the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Member States adopted the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem. At that session, States affirmed that the world drug problem is a threat to the public security of our States and the well-being of all humankind, since it undermines sustainable development, political stability and democratic institutions.

Major commitments were undertaken in context of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action with regard to reducing the demand for and supply of drugs, in particular in the areas of controlling precursors and amphetamine-type stimulants. There was also an agreement on international cooperation to eradicate illicit crops used to produce narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and to develop alternative crops, counter money-laundering and provide mutual legal assistance.

In that context, current and future challenges were identified and studied, as were new trends in the world drug problem and possible improvements of the current assessment system. Mention was made of the need to strengthen international cooperation in drug control on the basis of the principle of common and shared responsibilities. We believe that this is how this issue should be dealt with and not, for example, through the use of foreign military bases on the territory of a given country. The challenges in the fight against drug trafficking identified by the specialized bodies of the United Nations must be addressed.

We commend the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to provide financial and technical support to African countries with the aim of supporting and developing their national capacities to respond to drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. The Government of Venezuela shares the concern of African countries over the negative impact that illicit drug trafficking could have on the stability of their countries.

That is why Venezuela promotes South-South cooperation and major initiatives with African countries to combat drug trafficking. In this regard, at the Second Africa-South America Summit of Heads of State, held in Isla Margarita, Venezuela, on 26 and 27 September 2009, our heads of State reaffirmed their commitment to promoting initiatives, proposals and activities to combat this phenomenon at the bi-regional and bilateral levels.

In addition, during the 19th Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, tasked with countering the illicit traffic in drugs in Latin America and the Caribbean, also held in Isla Margarita from 28 September to 2 October 2009, major agreements were reached on promoting bilateral cooperation in the fight against drugs, in particular in West African countries.

An instructive and encouraging debate is taking place in several multilateral forums on the fight against drug trafficking. In all of those instances, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has provided concrete proof of its solidarity and cooperation with African countries, in particular those of West Africa, by signing many bilateral agreements on combating the world drug problem.

We trust that the consideration of this topic at this meeting of the Security Council will not set a precedent or legitimize any action the Security Council might contemplate on this issue.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Khazaee (Islamic Republic of Iran): The issue of illicit drug production and trafficking is one of the most daunting challenges that the international community faces today. Illicit drugs pose major threats to the socio-economic and security situation of all

societies. The pervasive nature of this phenomenon has made it such an international problem that it can be curbed only through collective and concerted efforts based on the principle of shared responsibility.

In the past couple of years, the bulk of the Council's consideration of drug-related topics concerns the issue of drug trafficking in some regions, including West Asia and West Africa, and a number of resolutions and presidential statements contain references to that issue. Resolution 1817 (2008) specifically focuses on the connection between drug production and security, terrorism and organized crime in our region. In these decisions, the Council recognized the need for the international community to come up with an integrated and balanced approach to address drug-related problems as a shared responsibility.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is presiding over the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as of this month and until December 2010. In this regard, I would like to enumerate briefly the efforts undertaken by my Government in curtailing illegal narcotics.

Over the years, we have dedicated thousands of Iranian police personnel and allocated billions of dollars to this issue. Based on this approach, the Islamic Republic of Iran has mobilized about 30,000 troops of its military and disciplinary forces all along our extensive border areas. Iran has also strived to reinforce and modify the fortifications, facilities and intelligence control systems at transit and border checkpoints in order to prevent the entry of trafficking caravans into the country. All those measures have resulted in the confiscation of massive amounts of various types of narcotics. That has helped to rank Iran first in the world, as we are responsible for 80 per cent of the world's total opium and heroin seizures. I should mention that the aggregate amount of drugs seized by the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2008 amounted to 702 tons.

In the area of regional cooperation, Iran has cooperated with neighbouring and Balkan route countries. Two regional information-exchange centres based in Iran, namely, the Anti-narcotics Police and the Drug Control Headquarters, are fully engaged in information exchanges with drug liaison officers in regional and neighbouring countries. The Islamic Republic of Iran has held eight rounds of the international conference for drug liaison officers.

Iran has also expanded its cooperation with members of the Economic Cooperation Organization and contributed to establishing a unit to combat drugs within that organization. We have also held several workshops on drug supply and demand reduction. Moreover, with a focus on the need for close cooperation and coordination in the region, in conjunction with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Islamic Republic of Iran regularly convenes meetings and exchanges information with relevant authorities and senior officials from anti-drug forces of countries in our region.

In that regard, Iran held a trilateral meeting in May 2008 as part of the Triangular Initiative. The Secretary-General referred to it in paragraph 38 of his report in document A/64/120, noting that "A first pilot joint operation under this initiative was launched in March 2009 and led to drug seizures and the dismantling of criminal drug networks." Furthermore, the report gives information on the first- ever joint operation against drug trafficking networks, which was carried out in March 2009 and led to seizure of drugs and the arrest of drug traffickers. I should say that, sadly, quite a remarkable number of drug traffickers arrested in my country are from African countries. That indicates that drug trafficking recognizes no borders or regions.

With respect to international cooperation, the Islamic Republic of Iran has signed a number of cooperation documents in the field of combating narcotics with more than 30 countries. We have actively participated in various international meetings and conferences, such as meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and Paris Pact round tables.

We have also facilitated visits by international authorities — including UNODC, Paris Pact and Dublin Group representatives — to Iranian borders. Following all those visits, Iran's activities and efforts in combating illicit drugs have been widely recognized by the international community. Given the fact that this menace serves as a breeding ground for terrorism, Iran's efforts in this regard have undoubtedly made a fundamental contribution to the global fight against terrorism.

Drug trafficking in some regions undermines efforts to achieve stability, prosperity and peace. That is because narcotic drugs are a source of financing for terrorism. They also fuel threats to the stability and

security of regions. We have faced that phenomenon in our own region for many years. We have experienced its devastating effects on the social and overall health of our society. We have shouldered a great burden in dealing with this threat, largely while receiving little assistance from the international community, even though we all know that no country can tackle this scourge single-handedly.

On the eve of the international conference in support of Afghanistan, which will be held next month in London, we hope that that meeting will also consider the international community's commitment as well as, in a spirit of enhanced partnership, the issue of combating drug production and trafficking originating from that country. We also hope that the conference will provide fresh political impetus to mobilize the international community to support Afghanistan's Government and its neighbours.

I would like to conclude by expressing the hope that the Security Council's deliberations on international and regional cooperation on the threat of narcotic drugs will become a basis for a common and shared responsibility to counter the world drug problem and related criminal activities. I also hope it will help to support relevant national, subregional and regional activities and mechanisms.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Mr. Loayza Barea (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to express our great pleasure at seeing you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council. We are absolutely certain that under your guidance, Burkina Faso and, consequently, the Council will have a meaningful month of activity.

Bolivia would like to associate itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We would also like to acknowledge the briefing given by the representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The Plurinational State of Bolivia is resolutely committed to combating the world drug problem, drug trafficking and organized crime. In that regard, it is important to point out that the Nineteenth Summit of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies — HONLEA — of Latin American and the Caribbean, which took place in Venezuela from 28 September to 2 October, commended Bolivia for its efforts to combat drug trafficking and eradicate illegal excessive crops of coca leaf.

In addition, the presentation of the UNODC report on the monitoring of coca cultivation in the Plurinational State of Bolivia recorded that the Government of Bolivia deserves to be commended for the significant increase in drug interdiction. There has been a 45 per cent increase in the quantity of cocaine based seized, from 14,912 kilograms to 21,641 kilograms, and a 145 per cent increase in the quantity of cocaine hydrochloride seized. In addition, the number of laboratories that have been dismantled continues to increase.

Operations against drug trafficking have increased by 58 per cent as compared to 2005 — from 6,831 in that year to 10,795 in 2008. The effectiveness of those interventions made it possible to increase seizures of cocaine and related substances by 252 per cent. In 2005, we seized almost 11.4 tons, a figure that rose to 28.8 tons of cocaine and related products in 2008. In 2009, as part of reducing excessive coca-leaf production, we eradicated production on 6,272 hectares — a substantial record in the past five years. That serves to amply confirm the commitment of President Morales in the fight against drugs. Similarly, there was a significant increase in 2008 in the seizure of chemical substances, as well as in the destruction of recycling laboratories and facilities for crystallizing the drug.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia has, for the first time, earmarked $20 million of its own resources to combat drug trafficking. In the framework of our regional and multilateral strategy to combat drug trafficking, the Union of South American Nations has worked towards the creation of a South American council to combat drug trafficking. We have signed bilateral agreements and undertaken joint interdiction efforts with Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil.

I should also note that, according to the World Drug Report 2008 published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, coca leaf crops in Bolivia account for only 18 per cent of world coca leaf. The maximum potential cocaine production in Bolivia is equivalent to 13 per cent of potential cocaine production worldwide. We should clarify that that figure will decrease even further once the

comprehensive coca leaf study is concluded. That study will calculate the quantity of leaves used for traditional consumption, subtracting it from the maximum potential cocaine production in Bolivia.

With regard to traditional consumption, in March 2009 President Morales Ayma presented a draft amendment to article 49 of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 to decriminalize coca leaf chewing, which had been prohibited in that Convention because of unscientific cultural prejudices. A draft resolution on international cooperation against the world drug problem (A/C.3/64/L.15/Rev.1) was recently adopted by consensus in the Third Committee and will in turn be adopted by the General Assembly. The draft resolution reflects the view that due account should be taken of the traditional licit uses of crops where there is historical evidence of such use. Coca leaf chewing is an age-old ancestral practice of the indigenous peoples of the Andes and the Amazon of South America and it is part of our history and cultural identity.

At the second South America-Africa Summit, held on Margarita Island in September, there was explicit recognition of the adverse affects of all aspects of the world drug problem, including illegal trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances and connected crimes, on security, peace, governance, economic development and public health for our peoples. This poses a severe challenge to social institutions and policies and contribute to environmental degradation, produce poverty and weaken efforts at social integration.

In that context, Latin America and Africa committed themselves to encouraging bilateral and regional initiatives activities, as indicated by the Permanent Representative of Venezuela, always on the basis of the principles of common and shared responsibility, which entails an integrated and balanced focus, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, non-intervention in internal affairs and respect for human rights, as established in the Charter of the United Nations.

This joint effort, this national effort and this subregional effort will make it possible to pool the concerted efforts of the entire international community to make ever greater strides towards achieving the results we all hope for in the fight against this scourge, especially in West Africa. We believe that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies are the appropriate forum for in-depth consideration of the subject.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General and all the ministers and other speakers who participated in today's debate.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bailly (Côte d'Ivoire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council notes with concern the postponement of the first round of the presidential election, scheduled for 29 November 2009 in the 18 May 2009 communiqué of the Permanent Consultative Framework of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, which was endorsed by all the main Ivorian political actors.

"The Security Council welcomes the positive steps taken by the Ivorian actors, in particular the publication of the provisional voters list and of the list of candidates. It further welcomes the 3 December 2009 communiqué of the Permanent Consultative Framework. It commends the Facilitator, President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, for his continued efforts to support the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.

"The Security Council takes note that the Permanent Consultative Framework considered, on the basis of a presentation by the Independent Electoral Commission, that the postponement of the elections was due to technical and financial constraints and that the first round of the presidential elections would be organized by the end of February or the beginning of March 2010. It urges the Ivorian actors to address the remaining tasks and to hold open, free, fair and transparent presidential elections in accordance with international standards at the earliest possible date.

"The Security Council notes again that the publication of a final voters list certified by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General is crucial for the holding of open, free, fair and transparent presidential elections. It urges the Ivorian stakeholders to meet their commitments to support the elections and to facilitate this process without delay, in particular during the 38-day phase during which the provisional list can be challenged before independent local electoral commissions and courts. It urges again the Ivorian authorities to allow equitable access to public media, consistent with the Code of Good Conduct for elections. It reiterates its intention to react as appropriate, consistent with its resolution 1880 (2009), towards those who would block the progress of the electoral process.

"The Security Council welcomes the signature by President Laurent Gbagbo on 17 November 2009 of several military rules and regulations, including seven decrees. It urges the Ivorian parties to make further concrete progress, before and after the elections, to advance the reunification and disarmament processes.

"The Security Council recalls that it will review the mandate and the troop level of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) by 31 January 2010. It reiterates its determination to bring its full support to a credible electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire. It requests the Secretary-General to provide to it, in the report referred to in its resolution 1880 (2009), options for the future direction of UNOCI, in particular in light of the publication of the final voters list and of a credible electoral time frame, including preliminary indications on timing, benchmarks and modalities for a possible drawdown of the operation."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2009/33.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 3.20 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation

Briefing by the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Ambassador Yukio Takasu, Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006). I now give the floor to Ambassador Takasu.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): This is the twelfth 90-day report to the Security Council in accordance with paragraph 18 (h) of resolution 1737 (2006). The report covers the period from 10 September 2009 to 10 December 2009, during which time the Committee held no meetings but conducted its work using the silence procedure.

On two occasions, the Committee received reports of further violations of paragraph 5 of resolution 1747 (2007), which imposed an export ban on arms and related materiel on the Islamic Republic of Iran. In line with its mandate to examine and take appropriate action on information regarding alleged sanctions violations, the Committee has studied these reports carefully and notes with grave concern an apparent pattern of sanctions violations involving prohibited arms transfers from Iran.

In the first instance, the Committee received letters from two Member States regarding the presence of suspicious cargo originating from Iran and destined for another State aboard the *M/V Hansa India* chartered by the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL). The vessel was redirected to a port of one of the reporting States, where the cargo was offloaded and inspected. According to this State, the cargo contained arms-related materiel. The State reported that, in line with its international obligations, it retained, unloaded and stored the cargo, and that the State will ensure that the items are neither allowed to reach their intended destination nor returned to their place of origin.

In the second instance, the Committee received a letter from a Member State regarding the presence of suspicious cargo originating from Iran and destined for another State aboard the *Francop*, again shipped by IRISL. With the consent of the relevant authorities, the vessel was boarded by the navy of the reporting State, which conducted an on-board State inspection. According to this State, the cargo contained arms-related materiel. The State reported that, in line with its international obligations, it unloaded, retained and stored the cargo, and that the State will ensure that the items will neither be allowed to reach their intended destination nor returned to their place of origin.

In response to each of these reports, the Committee dispatched letters to the two States involved in the transfer of the arms-related materiel, inviting them to provide an explanation for the transactions as well as additional relevant information about the origin, final destination and ownership of the goods. The Committee reminded both States of their obligation to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council under Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations, noted with great concern the fact that the Committee had received multiple reports of violations of paragraph 5 of resolution 1747 (2007) involving these States, and recalled that the violation by Member States of their obligations under the Charter is a serious matter. The Committee also requested that both States respond to the Committee within 15 days. The Committee also wrote to all three reporting Member States, expressing its appreciation for their responsible actions and urging them to continue to cooperate closely with the Committee and with any other States that might be investigating the cases.

Finally, the Committee wrote to the States with the reported links to the *Francop*, inviting them to provide any additional relevant information. In those same letters, the Committee highlighted the need for Member States to redouble their efforts to ensure the full implementation of resolutions 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007) and 1803 (2008); drew attention to the involvement of IRISL in multiple incidents involving the transport of items in violation of resolution 1747 (2007); and, with reference to its Implementation Assistance Notice of 24 July 2009, strongly urged

Member States to exercise extra vigilance as regards IRISL.

During the period under review, the Committee received three notifications from a Member State, pursuant to paragraph 15 of resolution 1737 (2006), in connection with the unfreezing of funds to make payments due under contracts entered into prior to the listing of an entity.

Finally, with regard to reporting by States on the implementation of all relevant measures set out in resolutions 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007) and 1803 (2008), the figures remained unchanged: 91 reports under resolution 1737 (2006), 78 reports under resolution 1747 (2007) and 67 reports under resolution 1803 (2008).

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ambassador Takasu for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to members of the Security Council.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): I thank Ambassador Takasu for his report.

Unfortunately, we have witnessed several significant developments on this critical issue over the past 90 days. First, the latest report of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Iran has once again underscored Iran's refusal to comply with its international nuclear obligations and to cooperate with the IAEA. I should like to highlight a few of the major points today.

Iran continues to expand its enrichment and heavy water-related activities. It conducted a multi-year effort to construct a clandestine enrichment facility near the city of Qom, in contravention of its Security Council obligations. The IAEA has requested clarifications from Iran about several aspects of this facility. The IAEA secretariat concluded that Iran's failure to inform the IAEA of its construction of an undeclared enrichment facility near Qom was inconsistent with Iran's IAEA safeguards obligations and reduces confidence further about the absence of other nuclear facilities that have not been declared to the IAEA.

The IAEA Board of Governors responded to the report by adopting a resolution on Iran by an overwhelming majority on 27 November. The resolution underscores the international community's increased, serious and unified concern that Iran continues to defy its requirements and obligations under IAEA and Security Council resolutions. The resolution urges Iran to immediately suspend construction at Qom and to cooperate fully with the IAEA in order to comply.

Secondly, the United States condemns the serious and repeated sanctions violations reported to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006). In the past year, there have been three reported incidents. All three involved the transfer of arms or ammunition from Iran to Syria; all three involved the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines; and all three are clear violations of paragraph 5 of resolution 1747 (2007). Iran has now been caught breaking the rules repeatedly.

In today's briefing, the Committee expressed its grave concern about the "apparent pattern of sanctions violations involving prohibited arms transfers from Iran". The Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) has documented in great detail Iran's habit of violating this Council's resolutions. Such violations are unacceptable. The illicit smuggling of weapons from Iran to Syria is not just a sanctions violation; it is also an important factor in the destabilization of an already fragile Middle East.

We applaud the responsible actions that States have taken to detect and disrupt sanctions violations. In the two cases that occurred during the 90-day period, involving two vessels, the *Hansa India* and the *Francop*, two Member States took action in the face of suspicious cargo originating from Iran. In both cases, the Member States offloaded the arms-related materiel to ensure that it would not reach its intended destination or be returned to its place of origin. The Committee has also already called attention to its July 2009 Implementation Assistance Notice, which urged Member States to "exercise extra vigilance" with respect to the role of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines role in violations of these resolutions.

The scope of these violations is alarming. On board the *Francop* were found 36 containers of arms and related materiel, including 690 122-millimetre rockets, around 12,000 anti-tank and mortar shells, more than 20,000 fragmentation grenades, and more than half a million rounds of ammunition. Tons of bullet casings were found on board the *Hansa India*.

We commend the Committee for the diligence it has shown in carrying out its mandates. The effectiveness of Security Council sanctions depends on the follow-up of the Council, the Committee and, ultimately, all Member States. We must ensure that these sanctions are rigorously enforced to ensure that destabilizing weapons are not allowed to flow from Iran to other parts of the Middle East and elsewhere.

As the cases we have discussed here today amply demonstrate, all States should give extra scrutiny to all shipping between Iran and Syria, especially if the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines is involved. States should also report any information about sanctions violations to the 1737 (2006) Committee. We look to the Committee to consider options for effective action to prevent new incidents, and we look forward to its ideas on ways that Member States can better implement those measures.

My third point is to note that these recent events — the discovery of the Qom facility, Iran's announced intention to build new enrichment plants, and its prohibited arms transfers — underscore the renewed urgency of full and robust implementation of resolutions 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007) and 1803 (2008). Member States need to redouble their own enforcement efforts, and the 1737 Committee should be even more vigilant, engaged and active.

More rigorous implementation of those sanctions will make it harder for Iran to acquire the technology and assistance to support its prohibited proliferation activities. It will make it harder for Iran to smuggle weapons to extremists and non-State actors. It will make it harder for Iran to abuse the international financial system to fund its proliferation activities. And full implementation will make it harder for Iran to build any more covert nuclear-related facilities, such as the site near Qom, beyond the gaze of international inspectors.

The United States, along with our P5+1 partners, continues to pursue a dual-track approach of engagement while increasing the pressure on Iran to fulfil its obligations to suspend all proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities and to cooperate with the IAEA. We have repeatedly expressed our strong preference for resolving concerns over Iran's nuclear programme through diplomatic negotiations to build confidence and to respond to Iran's request to meet its own humanitarian and medical needs.

The IAEA, with support from Russia, France and the United States, made a proposal to respond positively to Iran's request for nuclear fuel for the Tehran research reactor, despite Iran's continuing violation of the Council's resolutions and non-compliance with IAEA requirements on its nuclear programme. Iran's failure thus far to take advantage of that opportunity raises serious questions about its nuclear intentions — questions that deserve urgent, international attention.

The United States remains firmly committed to a peaceful resolution with respect to international concerns of Iran's nuclear programme. We also remain willing to engage Iran to work towards a diplomatic solution to the nuclear dilemma it has created for itself — if Iran will only choose such a course.

But engagement cannot be a one-way street. Iran must conclusively demonstrate a similar willingness to engage constructively and address the serious issues associated with its nuclear programme. The international community stands firm in its conviction that Iran must comply with its international obligations. Should Iran continue to fail to meet its obligations, the international community will have to consider further actions.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank Ambassador Takasu for introducing the twelfth 90-day report. His briefing revealed quite clearly the extent of the Iran's deliberate violations of the sanctions arising from resolutions 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007) and 1803 (2008), as reaffirmed by resolution 1835 (2008).

The serious violations are accumulating: *Monchegorsk*, *ANL Australia*, *Hansa India* and now *Francop*. These ships represent a true flow of arms and other dangerous material that is designed to destabilize fragile regions and to perpetuate conflicts. The regular shipments originating in the port of Bandar Abbas probably represent only the tip of the iceberg. Almost all of those violations involve the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines.

We have to understand the consequences. States, ports, charter companies and captains must be alerted to the risks they are being made to take. We shall not be satisfied with simply writing letters that go unanswered, which merely compounds violations of the law with disdain for those who administer it.

Moreover, even more serious is the fact that Iran has placed itself in a dangerous deadlock. Since 2003, we have tirelessly sought to open negotiations with Iran. We have stepped up our efforts and proposals, and for several months now we have involved the United States at the highest level in order to engage Iran in dialogue. That country has responded to none of our proposals.

The most recent offer — one of emblematic cooperation involving Russia and France — proposed enriching Iranian fuel abroad in order to operationalize the Tehran research reactor. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) guaranteed the operation. That was a unique opportunity to build trust. Iran refused.

Even more serious, on 25 September a clandestine uranium enrichment site of a size and configuration clearly inappropriate for civilian use was revealed to the IAEA. Iran had not declared that site, in violation of its Safeguards Agreement and of Code 3.1 thereof, as confirmed by the latest report of the Agency. That is a new, major affront to the trust of the international community. Everyone is now wondering how many other sites there are in Iran.

Given the gravity of the situation, on 27 November the Board of Governors at the IAEA adopted and transmitted to the Security Council, for the first time since 2006, a specific resolution on Iran. That resolution urges Iran to respect its obligations. It demands that Iran suspend work at the clandestine Qom site and provide full access and all documents in order to shed light on the origins of that site. It also demands that Iran confirm in writing that there are no other clandestine sites. The Agency had already made that request in writing on 6 November, and Iran did not respond. The resolution also demands that Iran apply the transparency measures requested of it under Code 3.1, an obligation for Iran under its Safeguards Agreement that it illegally and unilaterally rejected. Finally, the resolution asks Iran to resolve outstanding issues with the IAEA, which the Agency considers to be essential in order to provide credible assurances that there is no military programme in Iran.

Iran's reaction to the adoption of that resolution of the IAEA Board of Governors was to announce the construction of 10 new uranium enrichment sites. It goes without saying that, in the absence of a nuclear reactor, having 10 new enrichment sites makes no sense within the framework of a civilian nuclear programme.

We find ourselves most reluctantly at a turning point. This week, the heads of State and Government of the European Union will meet in Brussels. They will take stock of month after month of Iranian refusals to negotiate. If Iran continues to do its utmost to violate five Security Council resolutions, to reject the slightest confidence-building measures, and to refuse dialogue and transparency after the major revelations that have just been made, we must draw all the necessary conclusions and move on to a new resolution involving sanctions. Let us be prepared to do so. France, for its part, is prepared. There is no longer any reason to wait.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, we should like to express our gratitude to Ambassador Takasu of Japan, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) for his briefing on the work of the Committee over the past 90 days.

Libya reaffirms the importance of stepping up international efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue, based on a commitment to Security Council resolution 1803 (2008), which calls for continued diplomatic efforts to encourage renewed dialogue and consultations with Iran with a view to achieving a comprehensive, appropriate and long-term solution to this issue. That would open the way for the development of comprehensive relations and cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran on the basis of mutual respect and for the building of international confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. In this respect, we call on all relevant parties to continue direct negotiations until that goal is achieved. We repeat that what happened in Iraq should not be allowed to occur again anywhere else in the world, especially when it is based on groundless information.

Libya reiterates its conviction that we must deal with questions of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament in a comprehensive and non-selective way and that all States, without exception, must subject their nuclear facilities to the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

We note with disapproval that the Security Council has disregarded Israel's nuclear weapons, even though that country refuses to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty or to subject its facilities to the International Atomic

Energy Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime. This stands as an obstacle to the aspirations of the States of the Middle East to create a nuclear weapons-free zone, as expressed at the 1995 Review Conference of the States Parties to the NPT concerning the Middle East and in relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. The International Atomic Energy Agency must inspect the Israeli Dimona reactor, so as to confirm that Israel is not above the law. Otherwise, all States in the Middle East can rightly wonder why they do not have the right to have such weapons while Israel does possess them.

Our concern for and commitment to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons should not lead us to forget the inalienable right of all States Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, to possess nuclear energy and to develop nuclear technology. In this respect, we reaffirm that the International Atomic Energy Agency is the only specialized authority equipped to verify the fulfilment by States parties of the safeguards agreements, carried out in compliance with their obligations under the Treaty, in order to prohibit nuclear energy being diverted from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons and other forms of nuclear explosive devices.

The International Atomic Energy Agency is also the international coordinating centre for technical cooperation in nuclear matters. The international community should consider expanding the functions of the Agency to include the verification of bilateral nuclear arsenal reductions carried out by nuclear States, with a view to achieving the ultimate goal of totally eliminating these nuclear arsenals.

In conclusion, we reaffirm that international peace and security cannot be achieved through the possession of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, or the threat of their use. Rather, these can be achieved by consolidating the principles of dialogue, understanding and mutual respect, upholding justice and promoting fruitful cooperation between States. We hope that those States which possess nuclear weapons will uphold their responsibilities in this area.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Permanent Representative of Japan, Ambassador Takasu, for having briefed the Council on the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) over the past 90 days and for the work undertaken in that period. The Committee will need to continue to study the specific situation, which was the main focus of his briefing.

Over the period in question, the Committee continued to act in strict compliance with the provisions of the Security Council resolutions 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007) and 1803 (2008). In our view, the Committee should, in its future work, continue to work in the spirit and letter of those resolutions, with a view to effectively resolving the Iranian nuclear problem exclusively through political and diplomatic means.

At present, the situation relating to the Iranian nuclear programme is not simple. Unfortunately, it is still not possible to have substantive negotiations with the Iranian side. Nevertheless, the six States, including Russia, have not discarded the possibility of renewed dialogue with a view to reaching a comprehensive resolution of all issues relating to the nuclear programme of Iran. In our work in this area we need to be patient and calm, and must not let ourselves be overcome by emotion. Emotion will only hinder us in achieving our objective.

We hope that the resolution adopted on 27 November (GOV/2009/82) by the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will have a positive impact. We expect that Iran will take the signals contained in the IAEA resolution very seriously and that it will cooperate fully with the IAEA for a swift return to negotiations on the situation relating to the Iranian nuclear problem.

Mr. Zhang Yesui (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I should like to thank Ambassador Takasu for his briefing on the progress in the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) over the 90-day reporting period. We should like to thank him for his efforts since he assumed the Chairmanship of the Committee.

China has always supported the international non-proliferation regime. We are opposed to nuclear proliferation and do not wish to see any new instability in the Middle East. China is in favour of the peaceful settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue through diplomatic negotiations.

Recently, there have been new developments on the Iranian nuclear issue. It has been noted that Iran

has various views regarding the supply of nuclear fuel for the Tehran research reactor. However, the path towards a resolution of the issue is not completely blocked. Iran is still willing to engage in further consultations with the parties concerned to resolve the issue together. This shows that there is still the possibility that the diplomatic efforts of the international community will see talks resume. That may require more time and patience on all parts.

We also note that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) recently adopted a new resolution on the Iranian nuclear issue. We support the IAEA's playing a larger and more constructive role in order to properly resolve the Iranian nuclear issue and to promptly resume negotiations. We also hope that the parties concerned will strengthen the dialogue and cooperation with the IAEA and avoid taking further action that could complicate the present situation.

We believe that resolving the Iranian nuclear issue through diplomatic negotiations is the best option. It is also in the common interest of the international community. In the current circumstances, it is particularly important that the parties concerned continue to be patient and to exercise restraint so as to leave sufficient time and space for the ongoing diplomatic efforts.

We hope that the relevant Security Council resolutions on this issue will be effectively implemented. China will continue to participate actively in the work of the 1737 Committee. We will support and cooperate with the efforts of the Chair of the Committee and work to ensure that the Committee plays a constructive role in the due handling of the Iranian nuclear issue.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I thank Ambassador Takasu for his report and for his truly able leadership of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006).

It has been a busy and difficult three months for the Committee, a period in which, as the report makes clear, a pattern of sanctions violations has emerged. As the report notes, there were two violations of Security Council resolution 1747 (2007) of a similar nature in this reporting period: first, the *M/V Hansa India* interdiction in October and, later, the *Francop* seizure in November.

We are grateful for the prompt, effective and responsible action of all States concerned with those interdictions and seizures and for their cooperation with the Committee in investigating the cases. That has ensured that the prohibited arms and related material have been neither returned to Iran nor allowed onward to their intended destinations.

Those incidents leave no doubt that Iran is determined to flout the requirements of the Security Council, but they also show that the international community is determined that Iran abide by international rules and that mandatory Security Council resolutions must be upheld.

It is worth restating the reasons for these measures. Iran lost the trust of the international community by hiding the most sensitive aspects of its programme for nearly 20 years, by failing to implement International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) transparency measures, and by refusing to answer all the questions put to it by the IAEA as it sought to establish the facts.

The most recent report by former IAEA Director General Mr. ElBaradei concludes, as his previous reports have done, that he was unable to verify that Iran's nuclear programme is for exclusively peaceful purposes. It makes clear that Iran has not suspended its enrichment-related activities or its work on heavy water-related projects, as required by the Security Council.

The report also covers the IAEA's initial conclusions following its inspection of the enrichment facility at Qom. Development of that site was in contravention of five Security Council resolutions. The Agency makes clear that it was inconsistent with Iran's obligations under the subsidiary arrangements of its Safeguards Agreement. Those state that Iran must inform the Agency of new nuclear facilities at the time of the decision to construct.

It is essential that Iran suspend all enrichment-related activities, including any further construction work at Qom. Iran asserts that it began construction of the Qom facility in 2007. The Agency makes clear that it has information that shows that Iran started construction before that date, noting that Iran's explanation about the purpose and chronology of its design and construction requires further clarification.

The report also shows that Iran has continued to ignore the Agency's crucial questions over its weaponization activities. The report states that the Agency is also still awaiting Iran's response to its repeated requests for access to persons, information and locations identified in the alleged studies documents. The report concludes again that, until those issues are clarified and until Iran implements the additional protocol, the Agency will not be in a position to provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear activities by Iran.

Iran's refusal to respond positively to the IAEA's proposed agreement on the provision of fuel to the Tehran nuclear research reactor is also disappointing. The deal offered a fair, viable and transparent means of meeting Iran's needs. It would have improved the prospects for a successful negotiation with Iran. Instead, Iran has shown once again its unwillingness to engage seriously with the international community.

That proposed agreement showed that the international community does not wish to deny Iran its right to civil nuclear power. We would support its development of peaceful nuclear energy providing that it meets its international obligations, and the generous E3+3 offer contains everything that Iran needs to pursue a modern civil nuclear power programme, which it claims is its aim.

However, Iran has taken every opportunity to delay and protract our efforts to reach agreement on that issue. The only reasonable conclusion that can be drawn is that its responses are calculated to buy time and to try to divide the international community.

The IAEA Board of Governors voted overwhelmingly to support the IAEA in its efforts to get answers to important questions. The vote sent a strong signal to Tehran. Iran's response was to announce the construction of even more enrichment facilities, to threaten to cease contact with the IAEA and to speculate about leaving the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Instead of engaging with us, Iran chooses to provoke and dissemble. Iran can flaunt its isolation, but that will only increase the determination and unity of the international community. I urge Iran to recognize that and to accept the outstretched hand that is on offer.

We need to dissuade Iran from continuing to develop and acquire proliferation-sensitive technology and materials. That risks sparking a regional nuclear arms race. In a region that already faces huge security challenges, nuclear proliferation would be disastrous for regional stability.

The international community has been very patient, but that patience is running out. If Iran continues to choose not to engage with us, we shall need to seek further sanctions. Our dual-track strategy will continue. It involves pressure to encourage the Iranians to comply and to negotiate seriously, at the same time as engagement to allow negotiations to begin when the Iranians are prepared to take the E3+3 offer seriously.

We are 100 per cent committed to solving those issues diplomatically. We hope that Iran's leaders are too, but ultimately that is a choice that only they can make.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.